Metaphysical Healing – Holistic Life Coaching (Certificate Program)

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Course 1- Segment 1

Advanced Metaphysical Concepts by Saiyra Akbar

"Reality leaves a lot the imagination." John Lennon

Advanced Metaphysics is about learning the nature of existence, soul, consciousness, and how it is related to humans and their interconnectedness with their environment. This includes our way of living, how our universe functions, and how humans interact with their environment, and other beings. Metaphysics is about the study of how life began and how it begins with every new creation. How the universe operates, what keeps the planets orbiting around the sun, how a cell becomes a human. In this course, we will discuss how consciousness evolves through our experiences and learning process.

History of Our World View Thinking-Paradigm Shifts

"Every truth passes through three stages before it is recognized. First it is ridiculed. Second it is opposed. Third it is regarded as self-evident." Arthur Schopenhauer

A paradigm is a model or pattern of our social structure, education, of the world we live in. We live according to a certain set of rules, till we come across something that is different from our current way of living and belief system. We call this an anomaly because it does not fit into our set of rules. You cannot deny it and yet you cannot explain it. So, at first this anomaly is rejected and ridiculed. Everyone tries to explain it within the current set of rules. When it cannot be explained, a new paradigm-set of rules are introduced in which the anomaly is accepted and resolved. The officials, lawmakers of society reject the new paradigm, ignoring and making fun of it. But gradually it begins to set in, it begins to get accepted, as people see the truth of it.

The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradigm_shift explains a paradigm shift as follows: "A paradigm shift, a concept identified by the American physicist and philosopher Thomas Kuhn, is a fundamental change in the basic concepts and experimental practices of a scientific discipline. Kuhn presented his notion of a paradigm shift in his influential book," The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962)". Kuhn contrasts paradigm shifts, which characterize a scientific revolution, to the activity of normal science, which he describes as scientific work done within a prevailing framework or paradigm. Paradigm shifts arise when the dominant paradigm under which normal science operates is rendered incompatible with new phenomena, facilitating the adoption of a new theory or paradigm."

A description of paradigms is also found on the following website https://www.kbmanage.com/concept/paradigms, "Paradigms are generally defined as a framework that has unwritten rules and that directs actions. A change in thinking occurs when one paradigm loses its influence, and another takes over."

Paradigms and Paradigm Shifts can be seen throughout history. For instance, the older views of the world were that the earth was flat and that our planet was believed to be the center of the universe and that all planets are orbiting the earth in perfect circles. This view changed in 1543, when Nicolaus Copernicus, Mathematician and astronomer said that the earth spins and the earth itself is a planet orbiting the sun. Nicolaus Copernicus came up with a theory that proposed that the sun was stationary in the center of the universe and that the earth was revolving around it. Copernicus designed a heliocentric model to prove his theory, where he created a notion of a universe in which the distances of the planets from the sun make a direct relationship to the size of their orbits. This heliocentric idea was viewed as controversial at that time, yet it began to change the views of some influential scientists and philosophers of that time. It was the start of a change in the way the world was viewed, and Copernicus came to be seen as the initiator of the Scientific Revolution.

Several decades later in 1610, Galileo Galilei, Astronomer, and Physicist proved Copernicus's theory. The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galileo_Galilei, says that "Galileo's championing of heliocentrism and Copernicans was controversial during his lifetime, when most subscribed to geocentric models such as the Tychonic system. He met with opposition from astronomers, who doubted heliocentrism because of the absence of an observed stellar parallax. The matter was investigated by the Roman Inquisition in 1615, which concluded that heliocentrism was "foolish and absurd in philosophy, and formally heretical since it explicitly contradicts in many places the sense of Holy Scripture". Galileo later defended his views in Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems (1632), which appeared to attack Pope Urban VIII and thus alienated him and the Jesuits, who had both supported Galileo up until this point. He was tried by the Inquisition, found "vehemently suspect of heresy", and forced to recant. He spent the rest of his life under house arrest. While under house arrest, he wrote Two New Sciences, in which he summarized work he had done some forty years earlier on the two sciences now called kinematics and strength of materials"

Around the same time Johannes Kepler's research on the planets and orbits resulted in proving that the planets did not orbit in circles, but rather in elliptical orbiting around the sun." Close to the end of the 16th century Isaac Newton, Mathematician discovered gravity, which brought forth another paradigm shift. Newton believed that the creator of the universe used fixed laws to construct the universe. Newton brought the earth and heavens closer to us when he discovered gravity. He observed the world around him and one day when an apple fell from the tree, he questioned himself, "What made the apple fall?' He realized the same force that kept the planets moving in a fixed orbit in space, made the apple fall from the tree. The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Newton, Explains how, "(Newton) demonstrated that the motion of objects on Earth and celestial bodies could be accounted for by the same principles. Newton's inference that the Earth is an oblate spheroid was later confirmed by the geodetic measurements of Maupertuis, La Condamine, and others, convincing most European scientists of the superiority of

Newtonian mechanics over earlier systems." Newtons' concepts were a revelation in explaining the workings of the universe that they were adapted into all systems.

The Newtonian Model of looking at the Universe was to see the world as solid and unchanging. Everything worked in accordance with rules that were inflexible. Barbara Ann Brennan, in her book "Hands of Light," explains that in the late 17th century and early 18th century the universe was defined as being made up of solid objects. Newtonian physics was extended to the 19th century to describe a universe composed of fundamental building blocks called atoms. Brennan says, "Newtonian mechanics successfully described the motions of the planets, mechanical machines, and fluids in continuous motion. The enormous success of the mechanistic model made physicists of the early 19th century believe that the universe was indeed a huge mechanical system running according to the Newtonian laws of motion.

These laws were seen as the basic laws of nature, and Newtonian Mechanics was the ultimate theory of natural phenomena. These laws held firm the ideas of absolute time and space and of physical phenomena as strictly causal in nature. Everything could be described objectively. All physical reactions were seen to have a physical cause, like balls colliding on a pool table. Energy-matter interactions, such as a radio playing music response to invisible radio waves, were not yet known. Nor did it occur to anyone that the experimenter himself affects the experimental results not only in psychological experiments but also in physical ones as well, as physicists have now proven.

This view was very comforting and still is to those of us who prefer to see the world as solid and unchanging, with noticeably clear, definite sets of rules that govern its functioning. Much of our daily lives still run into Newtonian Mechanics. Except for the electrical systems, our homes are Newtonian. We experience our bodies in a mechanical way. We define most of our experience in terms of absolute, three-dimensional space and linear time. We all have clocks. We need them to continue our lives as we have structured them-mostly linearly. As we rush about our daily lives, to be "on time", it is easy to see ourselves as mechanical and to lose sight of the deeper human experience within."

As time moved, other philosophers that changed the world, by paradigm shifts were Rene Descartes, Philosopher, Metaphysician and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, they were great thinkers, and Metaphysicians who believed that "rationality" brings understanding of nature by human reasoning. St Thomas Aquinas says that: "God is a necessary, timeless, immutable, perfect and unchanging being on which the universe depends utterly for its' existence, but who in contrast is completely unaffected by the existence of the universe."

"We are spiritual beings on a human journey." Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Paradigms change with time. As new knowledge and awareness emerges in our universe, our older belief systems begin to become obsolete, we begin to change and create new paradigms of thinking and believing-thus new ways of living are incorporated into our lives. In the 19th century electromagnetic fields and the Theory of Relativity was discovered which could not be explained by the Newtonian Model. Barbara Ann Brennan says in her book, Hands of Light, that, "In 1905, Albert Einstein published his Special Theory of Relativity and shattered all the principal concepts of the Newtonian world view. According to relativity theory, space is not three-dimensional, and time is

not a separate entity. Both are intimately connected and form a four-dimensional continuum, "spacetime." Thus, we can never talk about space without time, and vice versa; i.e., time is not linear, nor is it absolute. Time is relative. That is, two observers will move with different velocities relative to the observed events. Therefore, all measurements involving space and time lose their absolute significance.

Both time and space become merely elements to describe phenomena." An example of time is relative to everyone, is when we are having fun, time seems to move fast whereas, when we are in a sad mood or bored, you will notice time moves very slowly. Time varies with our personal sense of being and moods. Another example is when two individuals observe the same event. Upon question, everyone will have a different version of the event-It will be a story told from each's own viewpoints, perspective feelings etc.

Einstein furthered the study of gravity. He discovered that the curving of time and space created gravity, keeping the planets in their orbits. This is his relativity theory. Einstein put forth the idea of relativity, which states the speed of light is 186,000 miles/sec. Space and time are not fixed but vary with the speed of the observer. Different observers see different space and time. He eventually began to combine gravity and electromagnetism. Gravity was great for the universe, but at the subatomic level of the universe gravity became a weak force and did not have the same effect.

Then along came quantum physics and changed our view of the universe. In this model of thinking the atom is broken down into subatomic particles. (We will discuss quantum physics in the next segment.) "Small shifts in your thinking, and small changes in your energies, can lead to massive alterations of your end result." Kevin Michel, 'Moving Through Parallel Worlds to Achieve Your Dreams." As consciousness evolves and moves to higher levels, new paradigms are created and eventually become a part of our life.

"Imagination is more important than knowledge For Knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution." Albert Einstein Consciousness

"Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one." Albert Einstein

Consciousness is becoming aware that we are experiencing existence. The ability to experience enables one to have thoughts, emotions, shapes, images, perceptions, sensations, memory, intuition, etc. Consciousness enhances and animates physical experience. It pre-exists and emerges as we evolve. Our brain is a conduit for consciousness. The brain is meaningless without consciousness. Consciousness was in existence before everything was created. Consciousness gives life to the brain and its functions. The brain without consciousness is like a computer with no user, meaningless. Consciousness gives us the ability to become aware of what we are experiencing through our senses. We can think and ask further questions concerning that experience. Consciousness means being awake and aware of our surroundings. It is the act of understanding and realizing something.

The website dictionary.com www.dictionary.com/browse/consciousness defines consciousness as. "The state of being conscious, awareness of one's existence, sensations,

thoughts, surroundings, etc., full activity of the mind and senses, as in waking life; to regain consciousness after fainting, awareness of something for what it is; internal knowledge; consciousness of wrongdoing."

Another website, www.verywellmind.com/what-is-consciousness-2795922 has an article "Consciousness Is the Psychology of Awareness" by Keandra Cherry that describes consciousness as follow: "While people often talk about consciousness, it can be difficult to define. Consciousness refers to your unique thoughts, memories, feelings, sensations, and environment. Your consciousness is your awareness of yourself and the world around you. This awareness is subjective and unique to you. Your consciousness experiences are constantly shifting and changing. For example, in one moment you may be focused on reading this article. Your consciousness may then shift to the memory of a conversation you had earlier with a co-worker. Next, you might notice how comfortable your chair is, or you are mentally planning a dinner. This ever-shifting stream of thoughts can change dramatically from one moment to the next, but your experience of it seems smooth and effortless. Some different states of consciousness include sleep, dreams, hypnosis, afterlife, meditation etc."

Furthermore, we have emotions, love, anger, and are various other moods. So, there are varying levels of awareness, consciousness, and intelligence in our universe. The various levels of consciousness act as conduits for the expression of our consciousness. For example, plants, minerals, animals, and human beings are examples of the different levels of consciousness. It resides in human beings, making us aware of our experiences in the now, in the moment. Animals also have consciousness on a lower level. They have a sense of self-awareness that indicates they are conscious beings. For example, animals can communicate with each other. They have social hierarchies, such as a lion is the king of the jungle. Other animals fall into lower categories creating the whole network of the jungle. Animals know that they must eat to survive, which is another aspect of consciousness. It drives the animals to search for their food, shelter, and protection for their young.

Plants also have some sort of consciousness. When experimenting with soft music they responded positively. Whereas, when heavy metal music was played, they died. Our thinking faculties and understanding determine our level of consciousness. For example, we can interpret our current situation and provide a plausible solution to it. We can think and make the necessary adjustments to a situation. Consciousness involves thoughts, emotions, moods, perceptions, sensations, self-awareness being awake, and responding to the current state of being. The ability to be aware of the experienced moment; the ability to feel and respond in the moment.

"Knowledge is structured in consciousness." Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

Consciousness is the key to everything in the universe. It is consciousness that gives us the ability to create our life stories, through images, and visualizations. The substance of the universe is consciousness. We are building the universe as we go. As we experience, we gain new knowledge, adding to the universal consciousness. Consciousness can be described as one, being spiritual or mystical, awake, and focused on the current moment. When you are aware of what you are doing, for example, mindful eating is just that-being aware of eating, your bites, the sensations, the color, the smell, and taste of what you are eating. This way you enjoy the food you are eating, which will satisfy your emotional needs, and you will eat only how much you need to eat. You will be aware of

each bite and not overeat. The website www.crystalonsciousness.com, relates that, "Reality is about the evolution of consciousness in the alchemy of time. To become fully consciousness is to remember who you are as a being of light, why you are here, and where we are going as dictated by the collective unconscious that creates the programs of realities through which your soul experiences simultaneously.

Rene Descartes said, "Cogito, ergo sum" -- "I think, therefore I am." He was correct. Consciousness may involve thoughts, sensations, perceptions, moods, emotions, dreams, and self-awareness. It is variously seen as a type of mental state, a way of perceiving, or a relationship between self and other. It has been described as a point of view, and I, or what Thomas Nagel called the existence of "something that it is like", to be something.

Many philosophers have seen consciousness as the most important thing in the universe. On the other hand, many scientists have seen the word as too nebulous in meaning to be useful. Consciousness is the subject of much research in philosophy of mind, psychology, neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. Issues of practical concern include how the presence of consciousness can be assessed in severely ill or comatose individuals whether non-human consciousness exists and if so, how it can be measured; at what point in fetal development consciousness begins; and whether computers can achieve conscious states.

Consciousness is a term that refers to the relationship between the mind and the world with which it interacts. It has been defined as: subjectivity, awareness, the ability to experience or to feel, wakefulness, having a sense of selfhood, and the executive control system of the mind. Despite the difficulty in definition, many philosophers believe that there is a broadly shared underlying intuition about what consciousness is. As Max Velmans and Susan Schneider wrote in The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness: "Anything that we are aware of at a given moment forms part of our consciousness, making conscious experience at once the most familiar and most mysterious aspect of our lives."

"The same website further states that, "Mysterianism is a philosophical position proposing that the hard problem of consciousness cannot be resolved by humans. The unresolvable problem is how to explain the existence of qualia (individual instances of subjective, conscious experience). In terms of the various schools of philosophy of mind, mysterianism is a form of non-reductive physicalism. Some "Mysterion's" state their case uncompromisingly. Colin McGinn has said that consciousness is a mystery that human intelligence will never unravel. Others believe that consciousness is not within the grasp of present human understanding but may be comprehensible to future advances of science and technology."

There is a famous hard problem of consciousness that has baffled many. That is 'Hproduces the brain produce conscious experience? 'Meaning, how can brain neurons give rise to the personal experiences of color, sound, taste, pain and so on? In principle, scientists could map my brain processes in complete detail but, it seems, they could never detect my experiences themselves, that is they cannot grasp the qualia experience - the way colors look, pain feels and so on. The brain processes acquire a subjective aspect, unique to everyone, which is invisible to science. How can we explain this? Consciousness is a mysterious phenomenon, and with each second it is unfolding, bringing new knowledge to awaken within us.

"God sleeps in the rock, dreams in the planet, stirs in the animal, and awakens in man/woman." Sufi Teaching

We are all part of one consciousness experiencing ourselves, repeatedly. We are imagining ourselves in our reality from our perceptions, emotions, and thoughts. Whatever you think you are, that is who you are. Everyone has an ocean of consciousness in them. The more we learn about it, the more divine quality of pure consciousness is revealed. Such as psychic phenomena, paranormal and supernatural forces.

"The Universe produced phenomenally in me, is pervaded by me... from me the world is born, in me it exists, in me it dissolves." The Ashtavakra Gita

Another website http://biophysics.50megs.com/custom3.html, describes this concept in the article 'NonLocal Paradigm' by Lona Miller as the following: "Unbound Consciousness: Beyond the Mind/Body Model:", that "The universe is infinite, and so is the mind, not in the individual personalistic sense, but terms of consciousness. 'Nous' is an ancient word for what we now call a nonlocal mind or consciousness. Many philosophers and modern physicists consider 'consciousness' as the fundamental basis of all that is.

Alchemy, as the search for godhead in matter, argues that "there is one stone, one medicine to which nothing from outside is added, nor is it diminished, save that the superfluities are removed" as above, so below: as within, so without. Alchemists sought the Onus Mundus, the One World analogous to the modern search for a Grand Unified Theory in physics, or the Theory of Everything uniting all known forces. The Greeks conceived of the mind as both limited and infinite, human and divine. The root of this notion comes from Hermetic and occult sciences, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus. The mind is not localized nor confined to the body but extends outside it. This notion lies at the root of sympathetic magic. The Persians were even bolder in their view that the mind could escape the confines of the physical body and create effects in the outside world. Their physician Avicenna declared, "The imagination of man can act not only on his own body but even on others and very distant bodies.

It can fascinate and modify them, make them ill, or restore them to health." Synchronicity was first developed by Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung. Jung describes this concept as a meaningful coincidence or occurrences of events. It is an experience of two or more events which occur in a meaningful manner, but which are unrelated. When you notice the same coincidence happening more than once and it begins to take on meaning, then it becomes a Synchronicity. We have all experienced such coincidences and occurrences at one time or another, that is a time where an unlikely sequence of events occurs simultaneously, this type of coincidence may seem mysterious and unexplained when it happens.

Unconsciously, everyone has experienced these types of coincidences in their life, without realizing how it came about in the first place. We only see things as they are on the surface, but there is much more to reality than meets the eye and one must look beneath the surface of events and experiences to see the inner workings of their own mind at play. The website https://www.synchronicity.html says that "In formulating his synchronicity principle, Jung was influenced to a profound degree by the "new" physics of the twentieth century, which had begun to explore the possible role of consciousness in the physical world. In 1945 Jung wrote: Physics has

demonstrated that in the realm of atomic magnitudes objective reality presupposes an observer, and that only on this condition is a satisfactory scheme of explanation possible. This means that a subjective element attaches to the physicist's world picture, and secondly that a connection necessarily exists between the psyche to be explained and the objective space-time continuum. These discoveries not only help loosen physics from the iron grip of its materialistic world but confirmed what I recognized intuitively that matter and consciousness, far from operating independently of each other are, in fact, interconnected in an essential way, functioning as complementary aspects of a unified reality.' The belief suggested by quantum theory and by reports of synchronous events that matter, and consciousness interact, is far from new. Synchronicity reveals the meaningful connections between the subjective and objective world. Synchronistic events provide an immediate religious experience as a direct encounter with the compensatory patterning of events in nature, both inwardly and outwardly."

Synchronicities can also show us how there is a connection between the 'inner world' and the 'outer world'. They are not separate realities but one in the same, and consciousness itself is the bridge between these two dimensions. The external and physical world that we observe and experience as our reality, is the mirror reflection of our inner world. Examples of synchronicities include: an unusual phrase you had never heard before jumps out at you three times in the same day. In a foreign country, you are thinking of your high school friend, and you bump into them. A book falls off the shelf at the bookstore and it is exactly what you need. You meet someone who interests you and touches your soul.

Through synchronicity that person seems to come into your life over, and over again. You need money and somehow you get it. Etc., Synchronicities are patterns that repeat in time. Synchronicity refers to the wheels of time, though the actual concept of synchronicity cannot be scientifically proven. One can only record synchronicities as they occur and watch the patterns of behavior that create them. The concept of synchronicity is currently linked more to metaphysics and quantum physics that are merging, thus showing their interconnection and how we manifest synchronicities in our lives.

Synchronicities are the people, places, or events that your soul attracts into your life to help you evolve to higher consciousness or to place emphasis on something important happening in your life. The more aware you become of how your soul manifests, the higher your frequency becomes and the faster you manifest positively. Each day your life encounters meaningful coincidences, synchronicities, that you have attracted. Souls create synchronicities, played out in the physical. It is why you are here. It is how our reality works.

You can consider an event synchronistic when an inner experience such as a dream, vision, or other form of Deja vu, prepares you for the physical event. Your soul is always multitasking to create new experiences for you. If you observe how you move through life, you will understand. Doing this allows many people to clear up their issues by writing their story as a catharsis of their experiences here. Everything we experience is because we set it in motion through our past actions and experiences, and the effects are what we attract to our physical world. There are no accidents, just synchronicity wheels, karma, wheels within wheels, the evolution of consciousness in the alchemy of time.

What Is Matter?

"...Matter and energy is interchangeable. Mass is nothing but a form of energy. Matter is simply slowed down or crystallized energy. Our bodies are energy." Barbara A Brennan, Hands of Light

"All matter, both physical and subtle, has frequency. Matter of different frequencies can coexist in the same space, just as energies of different frequencies (i.e., radio and TV) can exist nondestructively in the same space." Richard Gerber, Vibration Medicine

Matter is frozen dense light, the fabric from which everything is created. Matter is a solid object composed of atoms and yet matter exists only in the mind. The mind is always full of matter covering the consciousness. The consciousness gives rise to the chatter, forms, and images in a whirlwind of matter. To still the mind is to experience consciousness. One can experience deep levels of consciousness through meditation, dreams, visions etc. The experiment is in the mind. Baba Muktananda said, "Earth, moon, stars, and sun revolve inside me."

That is the world inside us, which we reflect to our outer world. A simple but elegant explanation of matter can be found on the website http://www.chem4kids.com/files/matter_intro.html "What is matter? Matter is everything around you. Atoms and compounds are all made of exceedingly small parts of matter. Those atoms go on to build the things you see and touch every day. Matter is defined as anything that has mass and takes up space (it has volume). What is mass? Mass is the amount of matter in an object."

Matter is the thing from which physical existence becomes manifest. That existence is brought forth from the merging of matter and consciousness at its varying levels. Matter can be changed and manipulated by changing its vibrational frequency. Matter is functioning at very dense, slow vibrations. By increasing the vibrational frequency, it can be made to function as light energy bodies. We are made of matters so we can change ourselves by changing our vibrational frequency. To change a situation, we need to change the vibrational frequency of that situation.

A higher frequency change is needed to move out of a situation. For example, healing a disease or mental, or emotional disorder can be healed by the shifting of the vibrational frequency of the diseased state. Matter consists of atoms, and atoms are composed of protons, neutrons, and electrons. Neutrons and protons can be further broken into sub-atomic particles called quarks. Electrons are from the lepton particles. The subatomic particles are the foundational building blocks of everything in the universe. Therefore, on the molecular and atomic level an atom can be altered. The structure of the atom can be changed.

Everything is energy and has a frequency at which it exists. To change our existence, we need to change the frequency of the current state. Barbara Ann Brennan says in her book, "Hands of Light," that, "As we penetrate deeper into matter, nature does not show us any isolated "basic building blocks" as Newtonian physics suggested. The search for the basic building blocks of matter had to be abandoned when physicists found so many elementary particles that they could hardly be called elementary. Through experiments in the past few decades, physicists found matter to be completely mutable, and on the subatomic level, matter does not exist with certainty in definite places but rather shows "tendencies" to exist.

All particles can be transmuted into other particles. They can be created from energy and can vanish into energy. When and where this happens, we cannot determine exactly, but we do know it is continuously occurring. All of matter is made up of atomic and subatomic particles such as protons, neutrons, and electrons. There are infinite arrangements of atomic and subatomic particles within matter. Scientists in the early twentieth century noticed that electrons demonstrated behaviors of particles and waves of light.

This is shown in the double-slit experiment. This experiment revealed that a single electron can pass through two holes simultaneously. This proved that electrons had wavelike properties, because only waves had the ability to pass through two windows simultaneously. Richard Gerber explains in "Vibration Medicine: New Choices for Healing Ourselves," that, "It appears that electrons display the complementary behaviors of both waves and particles simultaneously. Two mutually exclusive properties of energy and matter co-exist within a single electron. Gerber goes on to explain that the wave/particle reflects the energy-matter relationship. Which is that matter is frozen energy. Matter and energy are one and the same-they are interchangeable and interconvertible.

Matter can be changed to energy and vice versa energy can be changed to matter. Gerber says in the same book that, "Matter is composed of overly complex, infinitely orchestrated energy fields. The combinations are governed by various 'laws of nature' which physics has sought to discover. The term "fields within fields" has been appropriately applied to this theoretical model. If we apply this to living systems, the cellular matrix of the physical energetic interference pattern interpenetrated by the organizing bioenergetic field of the etheric body. This understanding of matter as a specialized energy "field" is a revolution in thought..." Dr. Richard Gerber goes onto say that this revolutionary way of looking at matter, "...is also the departure point from conventional "Newtonian Medical Approaches" to what I call the "Einsteinian" paradigm of healing: The practical application of this clearer understanding of matter to human illness.

Vibrational medicine is a systems approach based upon the Einsteinian paradigm of healing. Vibrational medicine attempts to interface with primary subtle energetic fields that underlie and contribute to the functional expression of the physical body. Whereas the Newtonian pharmacokinetic approach deals primarily with molecular interactions such as enzymes and receptors, this new energetic model will allow doctors to conceptualize systems of healing that work at a more primary, subtle energetic level." Matter exists in varying degrees of frozen light and wave-packets, in infinite amounts. Thus, each part of the universe contains subtle energy matter. Which emphasizes that matter is frozen energy and therefore has light and frequency properties, which further indicates that matter is some type of energy interference pattern (due to its wave like function). Matter exists at different frequency levels.

The higher the frequency the subtle (lighter) the matter. Our physical world is made of dense matter with slow frequency. Our subtle bodies, however, are light matter with higher frequencies. Richard Gerber explains in "Vibration Medicine: New Choices for Healing Ourselves," that "...we are multi-dimensional beings. We are more than just flesh and bones, cells, and proteins. We are beings in dynamic equilibrium with a universe of energy and light of many different frequencies and forms. We are composed of the stuff of the universe which, as we have already discovered, is frozen light. Mystics throughout the ages have referred to us as beings of light. It is

only now that science has begun to validate the basic premise behind this statement." In a nutshell, we can say that matter is composed of physical and subtle-energy parts which create a multi-dimensional universe and human beings. Only now are we beginning to explore our subtle energetic anatomy and to accept the invisible as our whole self. Barbara A. Brennan describes the wave-like behavior of matter in 'Hands of Light' as the wave being a probability wave. She explains that "Physicists have found that particles can be waves at the same time because they are not real physical waves like sound or water waves but rather, they are probability waves.

Probability waves do not represent probabilities of things. This is a tough concept to understand, but essentially the physicists are saying there is no such thing as a "thing." What we used to call "things" are really "events" or paths that might become events. Our old world of solid objects and the deterministic law of nature is now dissolved into a world of wave-like patterns of interconnections" Brennan explains further that the whole universe is a dynamic web of inseparable fields of energy. Which makes the universe into one whole universe-Where everything is connected. Even the parts act, and in a universe where everything is connected, through energy fields, then we as the observer are included in shaping and changing the patterns of the energy fields of matter. "The whole universe appears as a dynamic web of inseparable whole which always includes the observer in an essential way. If the universe is indeed composed of such a web, there is (logically) no such thing as a part. Thus, we are not separated parts of a whole. We are a whole." Then this further connects us to the quantum concept of Holograms.

The holographic view is that each part of the universe is an exact representation of the whole and can be used to reconstruct the entire hologram. This holographic view of the universe has been studied by Dr. David Bohn, physicist, which he talks about in his book, "The Implicate Order." In the book he goes on to talk about an Implicate Enfolded Order of the Universe, which is the basis of all manifest reality and exists in an unmanifested state. Bohm says that manifest reality is the Explicate Unfolded Order. "Parts are seen to be in immediate connection, in which their dynamical relationships depend on an irreducible way on the state of the whole system," That is the universe is not separate parts of a whole.

These concepts are being used in Energy Therapies and are foundational to exploring and healing the Holistic Human Being. Barbara A. Brennan says in "Hands of Light," that, "...since we are inseparable parts of the whole and tap into the creative powers of the universe to instantaneously heal anyone anywhere. Some healers can do this to a certain extent by merging and becoming one with God and the patient. Becoming a healer means to move toward this universal creative power which we experience as love by reidentifying self with and becoming universal, becoming one with God. One steppingstone to this wholeness is to let go of our limited self-definitions based on our Newtonian past of separated parts and to identify ourselves with beings of energy fields. If we can integrate that reality into our lives in a practical and verifiable way, we can separate fantasy from a possible broader reality.

Once we associate ourselves with energy fields, higher consciousness becomes associated with higher frequency and greater coherency.....As our awareness progresses into higher frequencies and higher bodies, we become more and more connected until we are eventually one with the universe. Using this concept, the meditative experience, then, can be defined as an

experience of raising our consciousness to a higher frequency so that it can then experience the reality of our higher bodies, our higher consciousness and the higher worlds we exist in.”

Segment 2- Advanced Metaphysical Concepts II by Saiyra Akbar

"Cosmos is a Greek word for the order of the universe. It is in a way the opposite of Chaos. It implies the deep interconnectedness of all things. It conveys awe for the intricate and subtle way in which the universe is put together." Carl Sagan

In this segment we will explore advanced metaphysical concepts and principles which are found in the Quantum Physics field, which seem to indicate amazing possibilities related to consciousness. Quantum physics is a complex field of study, and I urge you to pursue it further if you so desire. I will be giving you a foundation of quantum concepts along with some interesting videos, to become familiar with the basic concepts. The terms "Quantum Physics" and "Quantum Mechanics," may be confusing. These two terms are often used interchangeably, but they are a bit different.

Quantum Physics refers to the entire Quantum field, whereas Quantum Mechanics refers to a sub-section of the field. Kevin L. Michel describes this concept in his book, "Moving Through Parallel Worlds to Achieve Your Dreams," he says that "Quantum Physics studies the smallest constituent parts of matter. " Another website, www.livescience.com/33810-quantum-mechanics-explanation.html, an article by Robert Colman, "What Is Quantum Mechanics" describes Quantum Mechanic as, "Quantum Mechanics is the branch of physics relating to the exceedingly small. It results in what may appear to be some very strange conclusions about the physical world. At the scale of atoms and electrons, many of the equations of classical mechanics, which describe how things move at everyday sizes and speeds, cease to be useful. In classical mechanics, objects exist in a specific place at a specific time.

However, in quantum mechanics, objects instead exist in a haze of probability; they have a certain chance of being at point A, another chance at of being at point B, and so on." In a nutshell, Quantum Mechanics is the body of scientific laws that describe the behavior of photons, electrons, and the other particles that make up the universe. Here the subatomic particles do not obey the same physical laws as objects on a large scale, such as planets and stars. Gravity is a great force in the universe, but at the subatomic level of the universe gravity becomes a weak force. In short, gravity is incompatible at the quantum level.

This breaks down the Standard Model of Physics, and a new model of understanding begins to take shape-Quantum Physics was brought forth to understand the universe at the sub-atomic level. The quantum theory explains the universe in a unique way, that is the universe is an energy field of probabilities where nothing is fixed. Anything is possible. The universe behaves in an uncertain way as everything is a state of probabilities, nothing is fixed yet. Kevin L. Michel in his book "Moving Through Parallel Worlds to Achieve Your Dreams," describes this concept through the Double-Slit Experiment. This is an experiment that was introduced in the 1800's by a scientist, Thomas Young. He shined a constant beam of light through a thin double slit opening in a frame. This allows the light beam to go through the double-slit and imprint its pattern onto the film.

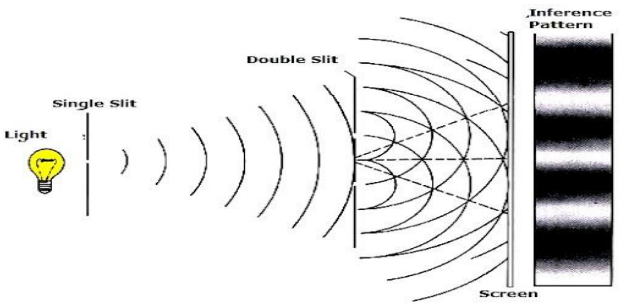

Diagram taken from http://www.mysearch.org.uk/website1/html/546.Double-Slit.html Kevin L. Michel in the same book says that "To realize the cause of the interference pattern, imagine if instead of light, that we flowed water through the double-slit. The waves going through both slits at the same time bounce off each other as they exit the slits. Some waves become larger as a result, and some become smaller. So, the interference pattern is a pattern of wave peaks and troughs. The exact location of each wave peak and trough can be mathematically predicted. The result of waves going through a double-slit of this nature will always lead to an interference pattern like the one in the figure above and the one below."

Experimenting with this concept went further than Thomas Young. Other Scientists tested this concept with electrons that were fired through the double slit frame. Kevin L. Michel in "Moving Through Parallel Worlds to Achieve Your Dreams," explain the experiment with electrons as tiny paintballs being shot through the double slit frame. We would expect to see the electrons forming a solid double-line pattern on the screen. Yet this is not what happens, we see an interference pattern on the screen. So, this means that these electrons are behaving like waves.

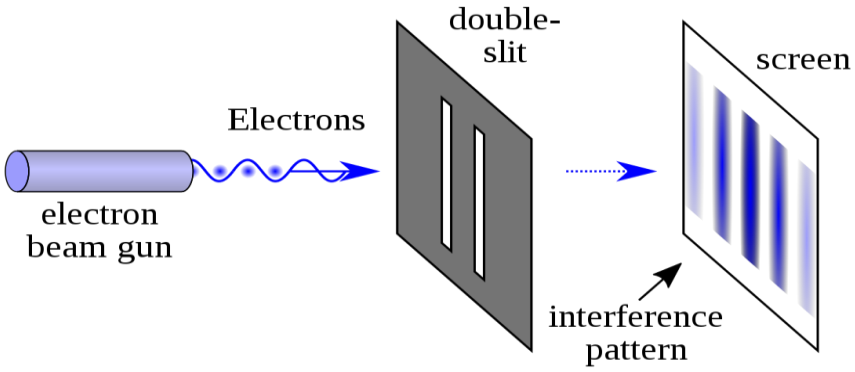

Diagram taken from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double-slit_experiment

Kevin L. Michel says in the same book that,

"Scientists thought that maybe firing all the particles together was causing them to bounce off each other and behave like waves. You can imagine different paintballs colliding as they exited the double-slit and maybe somehow creating a wave like pattern. This is a bit of a stretch but to verify the results the experiment was changed to account for that possibility. The change was that the particle

was fired one at a time. One at a time, with the electron gun waiting until a particle hits the screen before firing another particle. So, the new method using the same set-up is:

1. *Fire particle at double-slit.*
2. *Wait for particle to hit the screen.*
3. *Fire next particle at double-slit.*
4. *Repeat 10,000+ times…and the result was an interference pattern.*

Odd, right? Particles fired one at a time created an interference pattern, that is, a wave pattern. The eventual interpretation was inescapable but counterintuitive: by some means, the single particle was going through both slits and interfering with itself to create a wave pattern. The particle was in two or more places at the same time-this is the only way it could interfere with itself."

There were some scientists who did not believe that particles were in two places at once, so they decided to set up cameras at the entrance of the two slits. The experiment was performed once again but this time it was being monitored by the cameras. The result was far different then what the scientist expected. It was not an interference pattern, rather the particles behave as they should have creating two solid lines on the screen.

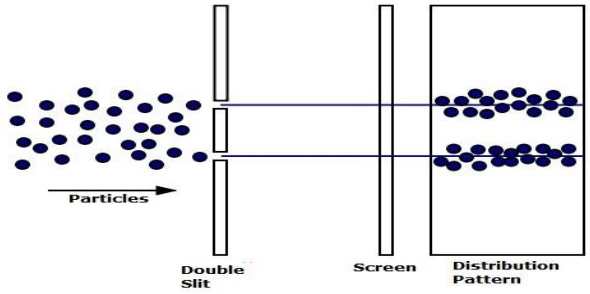

Diagram taken from http://www.mysearch.org.uk/website1/html/546.Double-Slit.html,

This experiment proved to scientists that when the electrons were being observed they tend to behave as they should. Kevin L. Michel says in "Moving Through Parallel Worlds to Achieve Your Dreams", that, "The particles that are the very building blocks of all things, are in all possible places until observation causes them to choose a specific position. When a particle is in many places at once the only information that can be accessed is the probability of where the particle might be in a wave of possibilities. This whole conundrum is called the measurement problem."

He further says in the same book, "So we must consider that the very particles our bodies and our physical world are made up of can be in multiple places simultaneously and can be configured in an infinite manner of ways, until the act of observing them brings them to one specific place. The very building blocks of our world are in all places and exist as a wave of possibilities until we observe them. This defies our normal understanding of the world because when we look around, we see particles, matter, objects in one fixed place and not as a wave of possibilities. To look around is to observe, to observe is to measure, and to measure is to shift all particles from a wave state into a fixed position. To look around is to 'collapse the wave function.'"

"There is compelling evidence that the only time quanta(electrons) ever manifest as particles is when we are looking at them. When an electron is not being looked at, it is always a wave."

Michael Talbot, The Holographic Universe

The Theory of Everything

In a nutshell, our larger universe deals in absolutes, whereas the quantum universe deals in probabilities. The Standard Model of Physics deals with the larger universe and is sometimes regarded as a "Theory of Almost Everything."

There are four primary forces in the Standard Model of Gravity that interact with matter to create anything and everything in the universe. They are as follow.

- *The Strong Nuclear Force*
- *The Weak Nuclear Force*
- *Electromagnetism*
- *Gravity (General Relativity)*

The former 3 forces seem to have no issue with the behavior of quantum particles, however the fourth, gravity does. The theories of Einstein, General Relativity (The Standard Model) and mathematical theories are used to explain the large universe, but these theories do not work to explain the universe of subatomic particles. Therefore, the field of quantum physics was born to study the world of matter on the small scale.

However, a problem arises when you have two distinct theories of how the universe works, because the universe is one universe, not two. A further problem arises because these two ways of looking at the universe are not compatible. In other words, General Relativity works for the larger universe, but not for the quantum subatomic universe. As a result, physicists have struggled for the past century to find a way to explain the universe on both the larger and on the quantum scale; that is, to unify these two theories into one elegant, unified field theory that explains everything – the so-called, "theory of everything."

At the subatomic level everything in the universe is in its uncreated form, it has no definite shape and there exists tiny vibrating particles. These tiny vibrating things are believed to be tiny vibrating strings of energy. In 1997, a physicist Juan Maldacena came up with the suggestion that gravity arises from infinitesimally thin, vibrating strings. He theorized that in this model of the universe, the holographic world existed in nine dimensions of space and one additional dimension of time. This idea intrigued physicists as it gave them a way to resolve the conflict between quantum physics and Einstein Theory of gravity-Thus create one complete theory 'The Theory of Everything", that can be applied to the whole universe.

The string theory is a theoretical framework in which the point-like particles of particle physics are replaced by one-dimensional objects called strings. In string theory, the different types of observed elementary particles arise from the different quantum states of these strings. In addition to the types of particles postulated by the standard model of particle physics, string theory naturally incorporates gravity, and is therefore a candidate for a theory of everything, a self-contained mathematical model that describes all fundamental forces and forms of matter. Aside from this hypothesized role in particle physics, string theory is now widely used as a theoretical tool in physics, and it has shed light on many aspects of quantum field theory and quantum gravity. The earliest version of string theory, called bosonic string theory, incorporated only the class of particles known

as bosons, although this theory developed into superstring theory, which posits that a connection (a "supersymmetry") exists between bosons and the class of particles called fermions. String theory requires the existence of extra spatial dimensions for its mathematical consistency. In realistic physical models constructed from string theory, these extra dimensions are typically compactified to extremely small scales. String theory was first studied in the late 1960s as a theory of the strong nuclear force before being abandoned in favor of the theory of quantum chromodynamics. Subsequently, it was realized that the very properties that made string theory unsuitable as a theory of nuclear physics made it an outstanding candidate for a quantum theory of gravity. Five consistent versions of string theory were developed before it was realized in the mid-1990s that these theories could be obtained as different limits of a conjectured eleven-dimensional theory called M-theory. Many theoretical physicists (among them Stephen Hawking, Edward Witten, and Juan Maldacena) believe that string theory is a step towards the correct fundamental description of nature. This is because string theory allows for the consistent combination of quantum field theory and general relativity, agrees with general insights in quantum gravity such as the holographic principle and black hole thermodynamics, and because it has passed many non-trivial checks of its internal consistency. According to Hawking in particular, "M-theory is the only candidate for a complete theory of the universe." Other physicists have criticized string theory for not providing novel experimental predictions at accessible energy scales and say that it is a failure as a theory of everything.

The string theory relates that at the center of every matter is a tiny, vibrating string. This string theory is a great theory as it unifies, Einstein General Relativity Theory, that explains how gravity works to keep the larger universe operational and at the same it explains how quantum mechanics operates at the smaller scale universe-The string theory is the unification of general relativity and quantum mechanics. String theory can explain the universe with one standard model, but it has a unique twist to it, as this combination of the major forces of the universe creates a phenomenal view of the universe with 11 dimensions. Physicists hope that one day the string theory will be able to explain the workings of the universe in one neat theory. Which will include all the forces, particles, constants, and everything else that makes the universe work under a single theoretical roof, where everything is the result of tiny, vibrating strings.

The following is video by Brian Green "The Elegant Universe", Part 1 and 2, and "The Nature of Space and Time." Please watch it to familiarize yourself with Einstein's Dream and the Quantum Universe.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vUzzCoArCo,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxamlRBy6J4

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxamlRBy6J4

Observer Effect

Another vital aspect of the quantum theory is the observer effect. We can co-create consciousness by our thoughts and the process of observations. At the subatomic level, an atom and its subatomic particles exist all over the place, until a conscious observe decides to look at it. The

observer does this by the act of observation, which is measuring the particles or electrons and bringing them to their fixed state which gives it, its shape and structure. This is how we create our reality, through our inner reality, through our inner senses, perceptions, emotions, thoughts, etc. At the subatomic level, everything exists in a probable state, until a conscious observer, decides to look at it. The observer does this by the act of observation. This act of observation is measuring the particles or electrons and thus given it, its shape and structure. We have our world going on in our minds. This is what we reflect into our outer world. Different observers see different space and time, and thus create their own reality. The very act of observation changes things. This type of theory can have profound effects in our daily lives. For example, when we are at a party having fun, times seems to go faster. Whereas, if we are at a boring event, time slows down. Another example is that we change our lives for the better, by thinking positively about our reality when our thoughts, perceptions, emotions are positive it will create a positive observer effect.

Barbara Ann Brennan describes another aspect of the observer effect, which reveals that our past lives happening right now but in a different dimension or space-time continuum. She explains how Einstein's space-time continuum states that the apparent linearity of events and situations depend on the observer. We accept that our past lives followed the linear way of thinking and have happened at a past time. But that may not be true, they might be happening now, in another space-time continuum. She says that many of us have experienced our past lives and have felt their effects as if they occurred a short time ago. As we live our life now, in this moment we might be rewriting our personal history and thus our past and future.

The observer effect concept can also be used with healing, we can use positive affirmations, intentions to create a healed state. The reality in our mind becomes our reality. To improve ourselves, our reality, our lives I have given you tools in this degree program, which will help to change and transform your life and existence.

The Holographic Theory

This theory suggests that the universe is a hologram and exists beyond dualism. We appear to live in a 3-Dimensional universe, but it may have only two dimensions. Physicists theorize that some distant 2-Dimensional surface contains all the data needed to fully describe our world-that is like a hologram. Then this information is projected to appear in 3-Dimensional form. That is the 2-Dimensional space interaction creates a 3-Dimensional image made from a 2-Dimensional process. Based on this theory our reality is just an image a reflection of our minds. This process is like characters on a TV Screen, we happen to live on a flat surface that looks like it has depth. There is no concrete proof of this theory that the universe is a 2-Dimensional Hologram, rather it is just a fascinating suggestion. The flat-space time concept describes the universe as boundless space extending infinitely in all directions, forever in time. The website

https://www.vox.com/2015/6/29/8847863/holographic-principle-universe-theory-physics, describes where the idea that the universe might be a hologram came from.

"The idea originally came out of a pair of paradoxes concerning black holes.

1) *The black hole information loss problem : In 1974, Stephen Hawking famously discovered that black holes, contrary to what had long been thought, actually emit slight*

amounts of radiation over time. Eventually, as this energy bleeds away from the event horizon — the black hole's outer edge — the black hole should completely disappear. However, this idea prompted what is known as the black hole information loss problem. It has long been thought that physical information cannot be destroyed: All particles either retain their original form or, if they change, that change impacts other particles, so the first set of particles' original state could be inferred at the end. As an analogy, think of a stack of documents that are fed through a shredder. Even though they are cut into tiny pieces, the information present on the pieces of paper still exists. It has been cut into tiny pieces, but it has not disappeared, and given enough time, the documents could be reassembled so that you would know what was written on them originally. In essence, the same thing was thought to be true with particles. But there was a problem: If a black hole disappears, then the information present in any object that may have been sucked into it seemingly disappears, too. One solution, proposed by Susskind and Dutch physicist Gerard 't Hooft in the mid-'90s, was that when an object gets pulled into a black hole, it leaves behind some sort of 2D imprint encoded on the event horizon. Later, when radiation leaves the black hole, it picks up the imprint of this data. In this way, the information is not really destroyed. And their calculations showed that on just the 2D surface of a black hole, you could store enough information to completely describe any seemingly 3D objects inside it. "The analogy that both of us independently were thinking about was that of a hologram — a two-dimensional piece of film which can encode all the information in a three-dimensional region of space."

The Holographic Principle states that every piece contains the whole. Richard Gerber explains in his book, "Vibration Medicine: New Choices for Healing Ourselves," that, "To create a duplicate of a lower life-form, such as a frog, cloning techniques are employed in which the DNA material from a fertilized frog's egg is removed and exchanged for the DNA material from an adult frog's intestinal cell. Because the instructions within each body cell contain the same library of information found in every other cell, it is possible to produce a completely identical frog without utilizing sexual reproduction. This is a kind of technologic virgin birth. The potential of the genetic blueprint is expressed in an appropriately supportive environment such as a fertilized egg. The fact that every cell within the human body contains the information to create an entire duplicate body, mirrors the holographic principle whereby every piece contains the information of the whole."

Kirlian Photography

Kirlian Photography was developed by Semyon Kirlian in 1939 accidently, when he and his wife first saw this procedure on a patient in Krasnodor Hospital, who was getting medical treatment from a high-frequency electrical generator. They observed that when the electrodes were brought near the patient's skin, there was a glow around the patient. This led the Kirlian couple to conduct several experiments, where they had an object on a photographic plate which was connected to a high-voltage source, which then produced an image on the photographic plate-the image showed an aura of light surrounding the image. They also used a leaf, plant material and a hand to further the study of this mysterious glow that surrounded the object in question. They placed a photographic film on a conducting plate and another conductor was attached to an object (exp. A leaf). Then the conductors were energized by a high frequency, high-voltage power source, producing photographic images typically showing a silhouette of the object surrounded by an aura of light.

Kirlian photography measured the aura-the bioelectrical fields also known as the subtle energy field surrounding the human body. The Kirlian couple believed that Kirlian Photography images showed a life-force or energy field that reflected the physical and emotional states of their living subjects. These images may aid in diagnosing diseases and disorders for Energy Therapists, Hands-on Healers and could also benefit in the field of Parapsychology.

The Holographic Theory & Entanglement

Entanglement is a key concept of Quantum Mechanics and the holographic theory. In 1982 a physicist Alain Aspect, experimented on subatomic particles. He along with a group of physicists discovered that under specific circumstances subatomic particles such as electrons can instantaneously communicate with each other regardless of the distant that separates them. It did not matter how close or how far the distant between the particles were. Each particle always knew what the other was doing. This concept violates Einstein's long held belief that no communication can travel faster than the speed of light, which is as good as breaking the time barrier. This concept of connection is called Entanglement. Einstein abhorred this idea, he called it "spooky action at a distant." Einstein stated that quantum mechanics is incomplete due to the theories of special relativity.

David Bohm, a physicist further explained this concept in terms of the universe being a hologram-that reality as we know it does not exist; the solidness of the universe is an illusion, a hologram, in which our consciousness is experiencing.

Barbara Ann Brennan says in her book, "Hands of Light", that

"Our old world of solid objects and the deterministic law of nature is now dissolved into a world of wave-like patterns of interconnections. Concepts like "elementary particle," "material substance" or "isolated object" have lost their meaning. The whole universe appears as a dynamic web of inseparable energy patterns. The universe is thus defined as a dynamic inseparable whole which always includes the observer in an essential way. If the universe is indeed composed of such a web, there is (logically) no such thing as a part. Thus, we are not separated parts of the whole, we are a whole."

David Bohm, in his book The Implicate Order says that "Parts are seen to be in immediate connection, in which their dynamical relationships depend in an irreducible way on the state of the whole system.... Thus, one is led to a new notion of unbroken wholeness which denies the classical idea of analyzability of the world into separately and independently existent parts."

In short, the hologram theory states that, every part is an exact replica of the whole and can be used to rebuild the entire hologram. To further understand this concept, it is essential to understand what a hologram is. A Hologram is a 3-Dimensional picture made with laser. Richard Gerber in his book, "Vibrational medicines," says that "Coherent light is extremely orderly, with all its waves moving in steps like solders marching in a parade." He goes on to describe that a hologram is a 3-Dimensional picture that is created by energy interference patterns. A laser beam which is a special type of light known as coherent light is flashed on an object. Then a second laser beam is bounced off the reflected light of the first and the resulting interference pattern-the area where the

two laser beams meet and intermingle, is captured on film. When the film is developed, it looks gibberish, with swirls of lights and dark lines. But as soon as the developed film is illuminated by another laser beam, a 3 -Dimensional image of the original object appears.

Another amazing aspect of holograms, unlike regular pictures, each part of the hologram contains the whole information. For example, if we create a hologram of a rose and it is cut in half, the half part will still be found to contain the entire image of the rose. Even if the halves are divided again, each piece of the film will always be found to contain a smaller version of the original image. This whole in every part of the hologram provides us with an innovative way of understanding the universe and the human being. This concept has been applied in many fields of study, especially in studying the brain. For example, non-locality memory of the human brain-the brain is likened to a hologram, where each cell contains the memory of the whole human being.

Barbara Ann Brennan says in her book "Hands of Light," that,

"Dr. Karl Pribram, a renowned brain researcher, has accumulated evidence over a decade that the brain's deep structure is holographic. He states that research from many laboratories by sophisticated analysis of temporal and/or spatial frequencies demonstrates that the brain structures sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch holographically. This information is distributed throughout the system, so that each fragment can produce the information of the whole. Dr. Pribram uses the hologram model to describe not only the brain, but the universe as well. He states that the brain employs a holographic domain that transcends time and space. Parapsychologists have searched for the energy that might transmit telepathy, psychokinesis, and healing. From the point of view of the holographic universe, these events emerge from frequencies that transcend time and space; they do not have to be transmitted. They are potentially simultaneous and everywhere."

So how can we use this concept in our daily lives?

Most people use left brain to analyze a situation. This thinking involves a linear and rational approach to problem solving, as it considers only facts and actual observations. Whereas, Managers, leaders, and coaches, and clients can learn to use the wholistic brain thinking view, which encompasses emotions and intuition, as well as logic. This type of thinking is called holographic thinking, brings a new advanced way of thinking skills into being, which is that holographic thinking allows one to see many perspectives at once. By using their emotional and intuitive minds in addition to left brain logical analysis, leaders, and individuals alike, learn to view a situation, and as a result get a whole picture of what is really going on. The ability is essential to ensuring chances for coming to sound decisions and success in every aspect of life. The important thing in using a holographic thinking approach, is to become aware of the different opportunities, and challenges from many perspectives at once. Thinking holographically is remarkably like Critical Thinking, you use the same techniques to reach a decision. Also, the holographic view aids in using energy therapies and are considered the basis to exploring and healing the holistic human being.

The Universal Energy Field

Mystics, Spiritual Philosophers, and Religious Scholars have talked about the life-force energy for centuries. Their teachings indicate that the life-force energy was an important part of their life. Prayer, meditation, yoga practices, Taoisim, Japanese Zen meditation practices, Sufi zikr,

Christian contemplation, the Kabbala, are all practices of enhancing the life-force energy, resulting in a higher form of consciousness. Their philosophies are all teachings of the life force energy and a universal energy that permeates all of creation. For instance, the Indian mystic teachings talk about 'Prana' which is the source of all living and non-living beings. Prana is the breath of life that flows through everything. They use the practice of yoga postures and breath techniques to move, manipulate prana throughout the physical form. Breathing techniques (pranayama) and meditation along with yoga postures help maintain health and well-being along with a youthful vibrancy.

The Chinese and Japanese all talked of vital energy called Chi, Ki, or Qi, that existed throughout all of matter within living and non-living. It is believed that within this vital energy there are two polar forces, yin, and yang. Health and well-being reign when yin and yang function harmoniously. An imbalance in either one results in disease. Their healers would then use acupuncture, acupressure, Zen practices to stimulate and manipulate the energy toward health and well-beings.

In 'Hands of Light,' Barbara A. Brennan talks about how the higher consciousness relates to the vital energy and life-force energy, in holy people, saints we see light around people's head, the halo is the auric energy field. The perfected light energy of the saint, holy individual. Brennan says that "Kabbalah, the Jewish mystical theosophy which began around 538 B.C., refers to these same energies as the astral light. Christian religious paintings portray Jesus and other Spiritual figures surrounded by fields of light. In the Old Testament, there are numerous references to light around people and lights appearing, but over the centuries these phenomena lost their meaning." Thus, we can begin to realize the truth that energy fields existed in all times, all religions and spiritual traditions talk about the aura, the light surrounding an individual, which is known today as subtle energy fields.

In the Western History Pythagoras and Paracelsus researched the universal life-force energy extensively. They believed its manipulation and stimulation could heal diseases. In 'Hands of Light,' Barbara A. Brennan describes how the 1800 Mathematician Helmont, "...visualized a universal field that pervades all nature and is not a corporeal or a condensable matter, but a pure vital spirit that permeates all bodies. Leibnitz, the Philosopher, Mathematician, wrote that the essential elements of the universe are centers of force containing their own wellspring of motion."

Brennan goes on to explain how other magnetic phenomena was discovered in the 1800's by Helmont and Mesmer, who developed Mesmerism, also known as hypnotism. She says that "They reported that animate and inanimate objects could be charged with this "fluid", and that material bodies could exert influence on each other at a distance. This suggested that a field, in some ways analogous to an electro-magnetic field might exist.

Count Wilhelm Von Reichenbach spent 30 years during the mid-1800's experimenting with the "field," which he called the "Odic "force. He found that it exhibited many properties that were like the electromagnetic field that James Clerk Maxwell had described early in the 19th century."

"All living things emit a tiny current of light." Fritz-Albert Popp

Von Reichenbach researched the Sun's electromagnet emissions and he found that along with magnetic poles there was another type of polarity in existence, known as the "Odic Field." His research led him to discover that crystals had an odic field which corresponds to the odic field in

humans, which was present in as their major axis. Von Reichenbach found the odic force when he was researching the way the human nervous system could be affected by various substances, he found the existence of a new force that could be used with electricity, magnetism, and heat, a force which he thought was radiated by most substances. He named this concept Odic force. The Odic force permeates all plants, animals, and humans. Believers in Odic force said that it is visible in total darkness like colored auras surrounding living things, crystals, and magnets, but that viewing it requires hours first spent in total darkness, and only extremely sensitive people could see it. It resembles the Asian concepts of prana and qi. However, the Odic force is not associated with breath, rather it is associated with biological electromagnetic fields-the auric fields. Von Reichenbach did not tie Odic force into other vitalist theories. He describes its characteristics as

- *the Odic force had a positive and negative flux, and a light and dark side.*
- *individuals could forcefully "emanate" it, particularly from the hands, mouth, and forehead.*
- *the Odic force had many applications. The Odic force explained the phenomenon of hypnotism. Study and research showed many of the Odic phenomena to be of the same nature as those described by Franz Mesmer and even long before Mesmer by Swedenborg.*
- *The French parapsychologists Hippolyte Baraduc and Albert de Rochas were also influenced by the concept of the Odic force as a vital force in nature.*

Brennan says in "Hands of Light," that "Von Reichenbach found that the force in the human body produced a polarity like that present in crystals along their major axes. Based on this experimental evidence, he described the left side of the body as a negative – pole, and the right side of the body as a positive + pole. This is a concept like the ancient Chinese yin and yang principle..."

Research and studies of the human energy field continued well into the 20th century with prominent doctors and researchers of which one was Dr. William Kilner, who discovered the appearance of the aura, which was unique for everyone. He discerned those illnesses were seen in the aura before they manifested in the physical body.

"The etheric and physical bodies, being of different frequencies, overlap and coexist within the same space." Richard Gerber, Vibration Medicine

Kilner developed a diagnostic system of the holistic human model, through extensive research and studies, where he was able to correctly diagnose the illness and disorder based on the aura color, texture, volume, and its general appearance. Some of the ailments he diagnosed correctly were tumors, liver infection, appendicitis, epilepsy, and psychological disturbances.

Other researchers that contributed to the bioenergetic fields include Dr. George De La Warr, Dr. Ruth Drown, Dr. Lawrence Bendit, and Dr. Wilhelm Reich who named the universal energy "orgone energy." Dr. Reich believed that the life-force energy, Orgone flowed throughout the human form and when an individual dwelled on negative thoughts and emotions, energy disturbances caused blockages. Thus, based on this principle, Dr. Reich developed a method of healing which emphasized stimulation and clearing of the negative energy from the mental and emotional states, thus bringing the orgone energy back into balance. Reich also discovered that orgone energy existed all around us, in our environment, in living and non-living beings.

The search continued to discover the secrets of the universal energy field. In the mid-20th century, another doctor by the name of Dr. Schafica Karagulla, discovered that illnesses were related to disturbances in the chakra system (the seven energy centers of the body) of the energetic bodies. Barbara A. Brennan says in 'Hands of Light, that," ...observations of the etheric body reveal a vital energy body or field which forms a matrix which interpenetrates the dense physical body like sparkling web of light beams. This energetic matrix is the basic pattern upon which the physical matter of the tissues is shaped and anchored. The tissues exist as such only because of this vital field behind them."

Another doctor by the name of Dora Kunz found that the human energy field is healthy, when its vibrational rhythms are in sync with the auric fields-that is the energy flow is harmonious in its flow from the auric bodies to the chakras and thus the physical form. If the energy is disturbed or blocked, the energy transfer is slower, and not easily moved, causing illness and diseases to set in.

Further research ensued with Dr. John and Eva Pierrakos, both husband and wife developed a diagnostic system based on the human energy field. They used a pendulum to discover the disturbances in the energy fields, which furthered developed into a treatment of disorders and illnesses, called 'Core Energetic."

This process is described as the unified process of healing the inner self, by focusing and working on the defenses of the ego and personality, to unblock energies of the body. Core Energetics seeks to balance all the subtle bodies, which include mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies, which in turn creates a balanced, harmonious state. Brennan goes on to talk about the evolving study and research of the Human Energy Field, she says in 'Hands of Light,' that, "Dr. Zheng Rong Liang, of Lanzhou University in the people's Republic of China, measured energy (called 'Qi' or 'Chi') radiated from the human body by using a biological detector made from a leaf vein connected to a photo quantum device (low-light measuring device). He studied the energy-field emanations of a Qigong Master (Qigong is an ancient Chinese form of health exercise) and the energy field emanations of a clairvoyant. Results of his studies show that the detection system responds to the radiation in the form of a pulse. The pulse emanating from the hand of the Qigong Master is much different than that of a clairvoyant."

Other studies and research in this field were done all over the world, Great Britain, Germany, Netherlands, and France discovered that all living beings have a frequency between 300 and 2000 nanometers, which is known as the biofield (bio-plasma) and those individuals who can easily transfer bioenergy have strong, healthy energy fields. In the United States, Dr. Valorie Hunt, an academic of UCLA contributed to the research by studying the effects of Rolfing on the human aura and found that certain frequencies correlated with different colors. In a study done in 1988, she found that frequency measured in hertz corresponded to colors as found below:

- *Blue 250-275Hz plus 1200Hz*
- *Green 250-475Hz*
- *Yellow 500-700Hz*
- *Orange 950-1050Hz*
- *Red 1000-1200Hz*
- *Violet 1000-2000, Plus 300-400.*

600-800Hz

- *White 1100-2000Hz.*

Barbara A. Brennan says in 'Hands of Light,' that, "Dr, Hunt also stated that "chakras frequently carried the colors stated in the metaphysical literature, i.e., Kundalini-red, hypogastric-orange, spleen-yellow, heart-green, throat-blue, third-eye-violet, and crown-white." Activity in certain chakras seemed to trigger increased activity in another. The heart chakra was consistently the most active. Subjects had many emotional experiences, images and memory recalls connected with the different body areas Rolfed. These findings give credence to the belief that memory of experiences is stored in body tissue." These measurements show that each aura field has a specific frequency and thus specific color. Dr Hunt further expresses her findings that the human body is evolving towards a quantum holographic view. The human energy field creates a web of light matrix that interpenetrates the physical form. Thus, new laws for the quantum physical form, which we find in the Holistic Life Model for living, is the new medical paradigm, where science meets spirituality.

Summary of the Universal Energy Field

In a nutshell, the Universal Energy Field interpenetrates the whole of the universe. It moves and permeates everything and connects all things to each other. It is known by many names such as bio-plasma, orgone, energy, prana, chi, qi, etc.

"...we move through personal experiences of "reality"-thinking, feeling, sensing, being, merging, individuating only to merge again in an infinite dance of transformation as the soul forms grow and moves toward God." Barbara A. Brennan, Hands of Light

The Universal Energy field operates on the law of resonance, which is the law of like attract like. For example, when you bring a certain frequency such as a crystal, or a tuning fork near another object, it will start to vibrate at the same frequency.

Researchers of the Universal field have discovered that this field is structured in a succession of geometric areas, secluded, quivering points of light. Along with that the energy vibrates and expands and contracts rhythmically in spirals, webs, sparks, and even clouds.

The Universal Energy can be felt throughout all the six senses, that is sixth being intuition, with sound, smell, vision, taste, and touch.

Another important characteristic of the Universal Energy Field is the accumulated different parts of energy, form to create a result, where the sum total is greater than then the separate parts. This field is limitless. It reserves are never empty or depleted. The Universal Energy Field is always connected to consciousness.

"The Universal Energy Field is always associated with some form of consciousness, ranging from highly developed to the very primitive. The highly developed consciousness is associated with the "higher vibration and energy levels." Barbara A. Brennan, Hands of Light

exercise – To See the Universal Energy Field

- *Settle down in a garden or somewhere in nature or outdoors on a sunny day. Relax and sit or lie comfortably. Take some deep breaths. Let go of all tensions, and tightness.*
- *While breathing and taking in the warm sun start to study the clouds, and sky. Keep looking deep into the sky and clouds.*
- *After a while you will notice tiny points of energy making squiggly patterns in the sky.*
- *These could also be described as tiny white points of energy or even black spots that materialize and instantly disappear leaving a trail of light dust.*
- *Continue this exercise and gradually expand your vision. This might be a little difficult at first, but with practice you will be able to see the whole sky and clouds, pulsating in unison.*

The Human Energy Field (Aura)

The Human Energy Field called the aura or bioenergetic field surrounding the human form, which stems from the Universal Energy Field. The aura and chakras transport and exchange energy with the universal energy field. The major and minor chakras, acupuncture points are the points where the subtle body is opened for energy to flow into and out into the Universal Energy.

"The field created a picture of an interconnected universe and a scientific explanation for many of the most profound human mysteries, from altering medicine and spiritual healing to extrasensory perception and the collective unconscious." Lynn McTaggart, The Intention Experiment

Universal Energy Field-The Incoming Primary Energy

Aura (The Human Energy Field)

Chakras (Major and Minor)

Nadis and into the Life-Force Energy

Nervous System, Endocrine System, Respiratory System, Cardiovascular System, Circulatory System, Digestive System, Skeletal, Muscular, Immune, Reproductive System, Urinary System, Integumentary System

Blood, and various organs, tissues, and cells of the body.

"Each one of us is also a packet of pulsating energy constantly interacting with this vast energy sea." Lynn McTaggart, The Intention Experiment

We are like sponges in the sea of energy that surrounds us, and as we know that energy is always related to a certain form of consciousness, thus we experience the energy exchange through our senses, which is by the way we see, feel, touch, hear, sense, intuiting and even direct knowing. Therefore, it is important to be open to the energy around us, because we are constantly absorbing incoming energies from the universal energy field and thus, we need to metabolize them just like the food we normally eat. The energy we received moves through all our auric fields and chakras (major and minor). Further all the higher energy comes with higher sparks of consciousness that we assimilate into our bodies. Which is a tall order, as this would be too much energy to absorb daily. We all need to grow and evolve at our own pace. Therefore, we strive to better ourselves gradually, by being open to change and new energy. Accept what we can and let the rest come as we grow and evolve in consciousness. An important part of growing and evolving is letting go of old systems and patterns of belief that might be hindering the growth process. This is an important part of life coaching, to do an inventory of your beliefs, perceptions, and core values. Letting go of things that no longer serve you will open you up to newer ones.

This you can do by opening your chakras through meditation techniques and exercises, which will increase your flow of energy. The more easily energy is flowing into and out of your chakras the more in balance and in health you will be. Thus, you will become disease free. On the contrary, deficient, and slow-moving energy levels will eventually lead to the distortion and imbalance of the life-force energy, which lead to illness, and psychological disorders.

Within the chakra system, each chakra is associated with a psychological function and an endocrine gland, and a major nerve plexus. The Universal Energy (chi, prana, etc.) flow into our human energy field, and then into our chakras, which further break it up into smaller parts that flow into the energy rivers, the Nadis of the nervous system. From there they are sent to the endocrine glands and blood which nourishes the whole body. The energy also affects our psychological makeup which affects our thoughts, perceptions, creativity, and emotional levels.

"...The Zero Point Field concerned the extraordinary quantum field generated by the endless passing back and forth of energy between all subatomic particles. The existence of the Field implies that all matter in the universe is connected on the subatomic level through a constant dance of quantum energy exchange." Lynn McTaggart, The Intention Experiment

Appendix & References

Quantum Consciousness Concepts

Below are some points, I call seed thoughts to understanding the nature of Quantum Consciousness.

- *The study of consciousness involves questions like why we have experience, and why we have different senses and sensations.*
- *Our brain gets animated from consciousness.*
- *Quantum superposition says that everything can exist in a multi-universe. That is things can be in two places at one time. Superposition creates separations in fundamental reality and each separation branches off to create a new universe / reality.*
- *Every superposition leads to create a new universe. Not all universes are stable, after a certain time, if not pursued or lived in they would collapse.*
- *A small electron if superimposed would last a long time before it collapsed.*
- *Multiple possibilities existing simultaneously.*
- *Quantum superposition is like a dream-like states, which point to the fact that the pre-consciousness and sub-consciousness operates on the quantum level.*
- *Consciousness is a self-organizing concept at the fundamental level, therein exists divine wisdom, and we connect with that wisdom. This what the mystics talk about when they reach deep levels of meditative states.*
- *One reason free will exists is because at the Quantum level we have many choices to choose from.*
- *Biggest question in metaphysics is the so called 'mind-brain problem.' The brain is made of flesh and blood, but the mind or consciousness is something else. So how do we get consciousness from a flesh and blood brain?*
- *David Chalmers, Professor of Philosophy has divided the mind/brain question into two solutions:*

1. *<u>The Easy Problem of Consciousness</u> which involves explaining the subjective process of the brain, that is now objective experiences are created from the various brain functions, Professor Chalmers feels that neuroscience will eventually explain how the brain functions in specific ways and the reason why they behave in specific ways.*

2. *<u>The Hard Problem of Consciousness</u> involves the subjective experience of the mind. Such as how we have a unique experience, or how one becomes self-aware. How can neurons and other brain functions create a subjective experience unique to an individual. A term used to describe qualia as the raw experience of sensations. Qualia is the unique feeling of being in the moment that each individual experiences. The feeling is like others in that position, but it becomes unique to the one experiencing it. It molds to the individual's soul and becomes their special feeling. For example, every day is a day like the other, but in each day, we do not exactly do the same thing as the previous day. That day becomes a certain time and space within the calendar years. We cannot replicate it no matter what we do. If one had the ability to go back in time, it would not be that day, you are creating another day like that day from your memory and observer effect.*

The following is a video by Brian Green, "Quantum Reality: Space, Time, and Entanglement." *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxamlRBy6J4*

The following is a video "Michael Talbot: Synchronicity & The Holographic Universe, Part 1 and 2"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rgYz_BU2Ew

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ugQBP3NQ2g

Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle

https://www.theguardian.com/science/2013/nov/10/what-is-heisenbergs-uncertainty-principle,

"The uncertainty principle is one of the most famous (and misunderstood) ideas in physics. It tells us that there is a fuzziness in nature, a fundamental limit to what we can know about the behavior of quantum particles and, therefore, the smallest scales of nature. Of these scales, the most we can hope for is to calculate probabilities for where things are and how they will behave. Unlike Isaac Newton's clockwork universe, where everything follows clear-cut laws on how to move and prediction is easy if you know the starting conditions, the uncertainty principle enshrines a level of fuzziness into quantum theory. Werner Heisenberg's simple idea tells us why atoms don't implode, how the sun manages to shine and, strangely, that the vacuum of space is not actually empty. An early incarnation of the uncertainty principle appeared in a 1927 paper by Heisenberg, a German physicist who was working at Niels Bohr's institute in Copenhagen at the time, titled "On the Perceptual Content of Quantum Theoretical Kinematics and Mechanics". The more familiar form of the equation came a few years later when he had further refined his thoughts in subsequent lectures and papers. Heisenberg was working through the implications of quantum theory, a strange new way of explaining how atoms behaved that had been developed by physicists, including Niels Bohr, Paul Dirac, and Erwin Schrödinger, over the previous decade. Among its many counter-intuitive ideas, quantum theory proposed that energy was not continuous but instead came in discrete packets (quanta) and that light could be described as both a wave and a stream of these quanta."

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Course 2
Segment 1-Advanced Critical Thinking Skills
By Saiyra Akbar and Shahir A. M.

We use our thinking skills to solve problems every day of our lives. Thinking skills are described as mental activities that are used for creativity, processing information, coming to logical conclusions, and decisions. Common examples include working out a weekly schedule, reviewing a credit card or bank statement for errors, evaluating a product before purchasing, and other work-related duties. Some require a higher level of thinking skills such as problem-solving, while others like choosing a TV show to watch, are minor thinking skills. Reading, writing, talking, listening, and studying all require thinking skills. Metaphysical thinking skills involve a higher form of thinking and being. Metaphysical thinking skills means using a higher degree of consciousness to make an educated decision when evaluating issues and circumstances.

Metaphysical Thinking Skills has two aspects:

1. ***Holographic Thinking Skills****: Most of the time we use our left-brain analysis to decipher information. This type of thinking is straightforward and linear. It is based on rational thinking and perceiving and approaches a situation with logic. It considers only the actual observations and facts. Individuals who are left-brain thinkers are orderly and follow a plan to accomplish a goal. They excel at mathematics and sciences. Whereas individuals who use their right brain thinking, follow their intuition and use their feelings more than logic, and reasoning. Right-brain thinkers acquire knowledge their intuition, faith, and inner knowing. Their imagination predominates and they are focused on art and creativity. Holographic thinking skills would require one to use whole brain thinking-that is the left and right brains together, which encompasses emotions and intuition, with logic and reasoning. Holographic thinking skills allows one to see many different perspectives at the same times. Individuals, leaders, coaches can view a situation from a holistic perspective-as a whole. This is the ability to see metaphysically and holistically a given situation and deal with it accordingly. This can be applied in all aspects on your life to get a clear picture of what is happening in each situation.*
   For example, when deciding, using the Holographic Thinking Skill Approach, you would address opportunities and challenges in a logical rational manner. Along with analyzing the facts, observation, you would use your intuition and emotional responses from the people involved to come to a sound conclusion.

Exercise to Think Holographically

- *Consider all the steps and potential actions you can take in any given situation.*
- *Write down all your potential actions and steps. (Facts, reasoning, observations)*
- *Next, write down all your feelings towards this situation and the potential actions you are considering.*
- *Now, listen to your intuition, gut-feeling, your inner knowing.*
- *Practice this as often as you can, till it becomes second nature to think holographically.*

"Indeed man has always been seeking wholeness-mental, physical, social, individual."

David Bohm, Wholeness and The Implicate Order

2. ***Critical Thinking Skills:*** *Critical Thinking is defined by www.dictionary.com/critical-thinking as. "The mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion." Another definition is found on the website www.alamo.edu/sac/history/keller/accditg/ssct.htm as. "Critical thinkers distinguish between fact and opinion; ask questions; make detailed observations; uncover assumptions and define their terms and make assertions based on sound logic and solid evidence."*

Critical thinking is moving beyond the regular thinking process about problems, ideas, and things to a certain transcended way, to arrive at the best possible solution in the circumstances. In everyday language, it is a way of thinking with logical reasoning so that you come to the best possible conclusion. The basic attributes of a critical thinker are to ask pertinent, open-ended questions, being able to assess statements and arguments, can admit a lack of understanding or information, has a sense of curiosity, is interested in finding new solutions, is able to clearly define a set of criteria for analyzing ideas. Someone with critical thinking skills can understand the links between ideas. Determine the importance and relevance of arguments and ideas. Identify inconsistencies and errors in reasoning. They can approach problems consistently and systematically. Reflect on the justification of their assumptions, beliefs, and values and is willing to examine beliefs, assumptions, and opinions and weigh them against facts. This also includes to listen carefully to others and to give appropriate feedback, they tend to look for evidence to support assumptions and beliefs and can adjust opinions when new facts are found.

Critical thinking is the ability to ask, "What are the facts and what do those facts tell us?" responsibly with no predetermined beliefs, to evaluate and analyze all possibilities, to draw conclusions that are consistent with reality and based on evidence, and finally to reassess and amend those conclusions as necessary, open-mindedly, and logically. In short, critical thinking skills means thinking for yourself responsibly and honestly. Also, critical thinkers are open-minded, avoid false arguments, and ensure that what they believe in is based on sound reason and reality. The following are some simple critical thinking skills taken from an article called "6 Critical Thinking Skills You Need To Master Now" by Will Erstas from the website https://www.rasmussen.edu/student-experience/college-life/critical-thinking-skills-to-master-now;

"While there is no universal standard for what skills is included in the critical thinking process, we've boiled it down to the following six. Focusing on these can put you on the path to becoming an exceptional critical thinker.

1. *Identification: The first step in the critical thinking process is to identify the situation or problem as well as the factors that may influence it. Once you have a clear picture of the situation and the people, groups, or factors that may be influenced, you can then begin to dive deeper into an issue and its potential solutions. How to Improve: When facing any new situations, question scenario, stop to take a mental inventory of the situation, and ask the following questions: Who is doing what? What is the reason for this happening? What are the end results, and how could they change?*

2. *Research: When comparing arguments about an issue, independent research ability is key. Arguments are meant to be persuasive – that means the facts and figures presented in their favor might be lacking in context or come from questionable sources. The best way to combat this is by independent verification; find the source of the information and evaluate it.*
   How to Improve: It can be helpful to develop an eye for an unsourced claim. Does the person posing the argument offer where they got this information from? If you ask or try to find it yourself and there is no clear answer, that should be considered a red flag. It is also important to know that not all sources are equally valid – Take the time to learn the difference between popular and scholarly articles.

3. *Identifying Biases: This skill can be exceedingly difficult, as even the smartest among us can fail to recognize biases. Strong critical thinkers do their best to evaluate information objectively. Think of yourself as a judge in that you want to evaluate the claims of both sides of an argument, but you will also need to keep in mind the biases each side may possess. It is equally important-and more difficult – to learn how to set aside your personal biases that may cloud your judgment. "Have the courage to debate and argue with your thoughts and assumptions." Potrfafka encourages. "This is essential for learning to see things from different viewpoints." How to Improve: "Challenge yourself to identify the evidence that forms your beliefs, and assess whether or not your sources are credible," offers Ruth Wilson, director of development at Brightmont Academy. First and foremost, you must be aware that bias exists, when evaluating information or an argument, ask yourself the following: What does this benefit? Does the source of this information have an agenda? Is the source overlooking, ignoring, or leaving out information that does not support its beliefs or claims? Is this source using unnecessary language to sway an audience's perception of a fact?*

4. *Inference (An Educated Guess): The ability to infer and draw conclusions based on the information presented to you is another important skill for mastering critical thinking skills. Most Information does not always come with a summary that spells out what it means. You will often need to assess the information given and draw conclusions based upon raw data. The ability to infer (make an educated guess) allows you to extrapolate and discover potential outcomes when assessing a scenario. For example, if you read that someone weighs 260 pounds, you might infer they are overweight or unhealthy, but you might need to look at other data which points to information that support your assumption. This data could be the individuals height and body composition. The process of inference is making a conscious effort to gather as much information as possible before jumping to conclusions. When faced with a new scenario or situation to evaluate, first try skimming for clues – things like headlines, images, and prominently featured statistics – and then make a point to ask yourself what you think is going on.*

5. *Determining Relevance: One of the most challenging parts of thinking critically during a challenging scenario is figuring out what information is the most important for your*

consideration. In many scenarios, you will be presented with information that may seem important, but it may pan out to be only a minor data point to consider. How to Improve: The best way to get better at determining relevance is by establishing a clear direction in what you are trying to figure out. Are you tasked with finding a solution? If you figure out your end goal, you can use this to inform your judgment of what is relevant. Even with a clear objective, however, it can still be difficult to determine what information is truly relevant. One strategy for combating this is to make a physical list of data points ranked in order of relevance. When you parse it out this way, you will end up with a list that includes a couple of obviously relevant pieces of information at the top of your list, in addition to some points at the bottom that you can disregard. From there, you can narrow your focus on the less clear-cut topics that reside in the middle of your list for further evaluation.

6. *Curiosity: All it takes is a conscious effort to ask open-minded questions about the things you see in your everyday life, and you can then invest the time to follow up on these questions. "Being able to ask open-minded questions is an important skill to develop-and bonus points for being able to probe."*

When dealing with problems, and challenges I apply critical thinking skills, which approach any given situation in a scientific, rational, and logical way. In my daily life, I apply critical thinking skills by analyzing all the facts, beliefs, and assumptions and skillfully evaluating all the information, and come to a sound decision. If I discover new information, I allow myself to adjust accordingly. Application of these skills aid me in dealing with work-related duties, and relationships effectively and efficiently. By applying critical thinking skills, one can bring an intelligent, systematic, disciplined way of assessing and gathering information. This is a systematic approach to finding a solution or concluding based on reality and facts. This enables one to analyze all possibilities and reassess conclusions. Critical thinking skills enhance the quality of consciousness and existence. It is a higher way to think and solve problems and issues, thus raising the level of consciousness. As a result, it brings one to respond logically and to look at problems, goals, objectives, work, education, and relationships rationally.

In a nutshell, to think critically we need skills that include observation, analysis, interpretation, reflection, evaluation, inference, explanation, problem-solving, and decision making. Specifically, we need to be able to

- Think about a topic/issue objectively and critically.

- Then we need to Identify the different arguments associated with the specific issue.

- Next, we evaluate the strength and validity of the point of view.

- Recognize the pros and cons or negative points that there are in the evidence and argument.

- Lastly, we provide structured reasoning and support for the conclusive decision.

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Deductive and Inductive Reasoning

Another form of Critical Thinking Skill involves the process of Deductive and Inductive Reasoning. I use Deductive Reasoning skills when I am performing work-related duties, as they are helpful in analyzing and evaluating scientific and mathematical problems. Deductive Reasoning follows the reasoning that if the premises are true the conclusion will also be true. Deductive reasoning is arriving at a guaranteed conclusion based on facts. If you change the premise, you change the conclusion. However, the drawback to deductive reasoning is that they are limited in their reasoning as they produce no new information. They are limited to known facts and rearranging the same information to reach a guaranteed conclusion.

The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deductive_reasoning defines Deductive Reasoning as,

"Deductive reasoning, also deductive logic, is the process of reasoning from one or more statements (premises) to reach a logically certain conclusion. Deductive reasoning goes in the same direction as that of the conditionals and links premises with conclusions. If all premises are true, the terms are clear, and the rules of deductive logic are followed, then the conclusion reached is necessarily true."

The use of Deductive Reasoning skills. For example, when I am performing work-related duties, and I need to analyze and evaluate a problem(s). I use Deductive Reasoning, a scientific approach that follows the reasoning, that if the premises are true the conclusion will also be true. Deductive reasoning is arriving at a guaranteed conclusion based on facts. If you change the premise, you change the conclusion. However, the drawback to deductive reasoning is that they are limited in their reasoning as they produce no new information. They are limited to known facts and rearranging the same information to reach a guaranteed conclusion. The website https://course.lumenlearning.com/waymaker-level1-english/chapter/inductive-and-deductive-arguments, describes this concept,

"In the process of deduction, you begin with some statements, called "premises," that are assumed to be true, you then determine what else would have to be true if the premises are true. For example, you can begin by assuming that God exists, and is good, and then determine what would logically follow from such an assumption. You can begin by assuming that if you think, then you must exist, and work from there. With deduction you can provide absolute proof of your conclusions, given that your premises are correct. The premises themselves, however, remain unproven and unprovable.

Examples of deductive logic:

All men are mortal. Joe is a man. Therefore, Joe is mortal. If the first two statements are true, then the conclusion must be true.

Bachelors are unmarried men. Bill is unmarried. Therefore, Bill is a bachelor.

To get a bachelor's degree at Utah State University, a student must have 120 credits. Sally has more than 130 credits. Therefore, Sally has a bachelor's degree."

The same website describes the process of induction,

"... you begin with some data, and then determine what general conclusion(s) can logically be derived from those data. In other words, you determine what theory or theories could explain the data. For example, you note that the probability of becoming schizophrenic is increased if at least one parent is schizophrenic, and from that you conclude that schizophrenia may be inherited. That is certainly a reasonable hypothesis given the data.

However, induction does not prove that the theory is correct. There are often alternative theories that are also supported by the data. For example, the behavior of the schizophrenic parent may cause the child to be schizophrenic, not the genes.

What is important in induction is that the theory does indeed offer a logical explanation of the data. To conclude that the parents have no effect on the schizophrenia of the children is not supportable given the data and would not be a logical conclusion.

Examples of inductive logic:

This cat is brown. That cat is brown. A third cat is brown. Therefore, all cats are brown. (Here the conclusion is not fully guaranteed)

This marble from the bag is white. That marble from the bag is white. A third marble from the bag is white. Therefore, all the marbles in the bag are white. (The conclusion is not 100% guaranteed)

Inductive Reasoning, the website https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-inductive-reasoning.html, defines inductive reasoning as,

"*The term inductive reasoning refers to reasoning that takes specific information and makes a broader generalization that's considered probable while remaining open to the fact that the conclusion may not be 100% guaranteed."*

In other words, you are making an educated or informed guess based on the information or data that you have. It might sound right, but that does not mean it is right. Together, let us explore some examples of inductive reasoning. You will quickly see what it is all about.

There are varying degrees of strength and weakness in inductive arguments and reasoning. Inductive Reasoning follows the logic that if the premises are true, the conclusion is likely to be also true. If you change the premise, you may or may not also change the conclusion. ***Inductive reasoning means arriving at a probable conclusion based on strong evidence.*** *When I am solving a problem, I start with deductive reasoning, that is with the available facts, and move to inductive reasoning, if necessary, which supports a broader range of information and application as they are not limited to facts. Problems can be resolved by the prevention of unnecessary speculations, which might lead to false conclusions and decisions. This is a systematic approach to finding a solution or concluding based on reality and facts. This enables me to analyze all*

possibilities and reassess conclusions. Below there are some common types of inductive reasoning examples:

***Inductive Generalizations**: Using a small sample, you generalize the whole population. For example: The left-handed people I know use left-handed scissors; therefore, all left-handed people use left-handed scissors.*

***Statistical Induction**: Like inductive generalizations, statistical induction uses a small set of statistics to generalize. For example: Since 95% of the left-handers, I have seen around the world use left-handed scissors, 95% of left-handers around the world use left-handed scissors.*

***Predictive Induction**: This is where you might conclude the future using information from the past. For example: In the past, ducks have always come to our pond. Therefore, the ducks will come to our pond this summer.*

These types of inductive reasoning work in arguments and in making a hypothesis in mathematics or science.

To summarize this concept, Inductive reasoning follows the logic that if the premises are true, the conclusion is likely to be also true. If you change the premise, you may or may not also change the conclusion. Inductive reasoning means arriving at a probable conclusion based on strong evidence. When solving a problem, one should start with deductive reasoning, that is with the available facts, and move to inductive reasoning, if necessary, as it supports a broader range of information and application as they are not limited to facts. Problems can be resolved by the prevention of unnecessary speculations, which might lead to false conclusions and decisions. To find a solution or to conclude, based on reality and facts, you would analyze all possibilities and conclude. And if you were to find new evidence you will reassess conclusions and decisions accordingly.

The following website has a Critical Thinking skills Workbook that you can try out.

https://www.schrockguide.net/uploads/3/9/2/2/392267/critical-thinking-workbook.pdf

The 180 Degree Method to Creative Problem Solving

Another important critical thinking skill is to solve problems effectively. The 180 Degree Method is a Metaphysical Thinking Skill and means turning 180 Degrees from your current situation and going the opposite direction to find a viable solution. The following is an example of this approach taken from the website http://www.eosworldwide.com/blog/180-rule-creative-problem-solving. In Ed Callahan's article 'The 180 Rule', he says,

"You've been in a brainstorming meeting where you are challenged to be creative and innovative, right? If you are like me, sometimes your mind goes blank. Here is where Rich Lucia, (author of 'Selling in the Now') applies what he calls the 180 Rule...

Rich suggests that we attempt to answer the opposite question to whatever we are trying to solve. Here is an example. Sales are off! What are we going to do to increase sales? Silence. Rich asks instead, what can we do if we wanted to ensure that sales continue to go down? Huh? But the beauty is

that the answers flow more easily. Here are some things we can do to keep sales from growing: Do not train our salespeople. Do not replace unsuccessful salespeople, make it difficult to glean product and pricing information from our web site, have a commission disincentive plan, do not keep our product or service competitive with the market. You get the idea. But amazingly, the negativity bias gets the juices flowing. Ideas abound. And then it is a simple thing to do the inverse. In fact, most people start laughing (or crying) when they realize they've been doing some of the negative things that prevent sales."

Sometimes, we do not realize that we are doing the same thing repeatedly. Will not doing the same thing repeatedly give the same conclusion. Yes. How long will we keep doing things the same way before we try a different direction? Sometimes the solution to our problems is exactly 180 degrees opposite of where we think it is. We need to apply what I call, "The 180 Degree Approach," meaning, a complete turn-around to solve a problem.

The 180 Degree Approach is a metaphysical critical thinking skill and means turning 180 degrees and going the opposite direction, which at first appears to be impossible and instinctively the wrong way to go. We have felt the same way when it comes to solving our problems, as they may appear unsolvable on the surface, and we may instinctively feel a certain direction is the wrong way to go. But that may be where the solution lies. The real barrier to our thinking our thinking, our belief system. We simply may not be ready to accept the perceived consequences of solving a particular problem.

To solve a problem, we must first put our problems into perspective. Problems are usually subjective in nature, meaning one person's problem may be another person's blessing. Our problems often do not have any life of their own, they only have the life we give to them, that is the emotional energy, emanating from our fears and lack of clear thinking.

We can use our powers of reason and critical thinking to formulate solutions to the problems we face. With serious life problems, taking a new, different, and bold direction can admittedly, be scary at first because going in a different direction is like being in the fog. We may know the heading, but not what is directly in front of us. Going a different direction will undoubtedly be more uncomfortable than we have been used to up until now.

By applying the 180 Degree Method, we begin looking for solutions in places that we thought were not possible. We must learn to examine all possibilities. For example, what would happen if we did the exact opposite of what we think we should do? List all the pros and cons and the consequences, along with the benefits. This can help you decide on a course of action. Sometimes we must do a complete 180-degree turn to get to where we want to go. And if we do get where we want to go, we find more meaning in our lives, not to mention solving our problems.

If you are facing a similar situation that calls for a complete life change, why wait? Sometimes we wait until our pain almost kills us. Only when the pain of change becomes less than

the pain of remaining the same. will we change? As with most things in life, we have a choice. We can take care of the problem now or suffer longer and still take care of the problem later.

There are 5 steps to a creative solution finding that utilizes the 180 Degree Approach. These 5 steps will help you to identify and clarify the problem, find solutions, and then implement and reassess the solution. Use these five steps as a guide to stimulate ideas and to get your creative juices flowing toward a positive resolution of the problem. Your attitude toward challenges can also be effective in your success at solving them. Make sure that any problems you perceive are not merely a matter of preference or taste. If it is a matter of principle, policy, or law: stand firm. Do not give energy to things that just do not matter.

Also, never resolve yourself to the negative attitude of "That's too hard!" Rather, ask yourself, "How hard can it be?" People just like you and me have done wonderful things and survived the hardest of situations. Be a person that makes it happen. I do not want to hear all the reasons why you cannot do it; I want to hear all the reasons why you can do it!

The Five Steps to the 180 Degree Method are as follows:

1. *List the Problem and the Outcome you would like. Next set the goal, that is clarify the specific challenge as well as the desired outcome in an emotionally detached way. Write a concise statement to reflect the current situation/problem. What is it like now? What are the premises that responsible for the current situation? Then what do you want the desired situation to be? Write your statements objectively, not subjectively, be honest and state the facts, no accusations, and leave your emotions out of it. Avoid reasoning based on emotions. An example would be*
   Problem: The current situation is a decrease in sales.
   Premise: Sales department is not employing trained salespeople to do the job properly.
   Outcome/Desired Situation: To train employees for effective sales pitching and good customer service and customer retaining skills.

2. *Break up the Problem: To break up the problem into its different components, for a better understanding. You can start by asking yourself why is the problem a problem? What are the premises of this situation (the facts)? List all the reasons and potential reasons why this*
   problem is occurring. Is this a real problem or I am making a mountain out of a molehill. Analyze your biases and assumptions. Evaluate the consequences of not resolving this problem? And identify the benefits of resolving this problem?

3. *Finding Solutions: To discover the most desirable, reasonable, and appropriate solution, based on logic and reason. Ask yourself what would you have to change about this problem to resolve it? What would I do if there was no down-side, nothing to lose? List all the possible alternatives no matter how unlikely; do not consider any consequences at this stage. Here is where you think 180 degrees by answering the following questions. What should I not do to resolve this problem and why? What is a completely unconventional way of solving this problem? Remember sometimes the answer lies in a*

direction that you never thought of going in. This includes looking for solutions, alternatives outside of your belief system. List the advantages and disadvantages of a decision. Also, keep in mind that there could be more than one solution.

4. *Implement Solution(s): To implement the solution and evaluate if they are of value and solve the problem. Establish a plan of action and a time frame. Follow up, reassess, and adjust solution accordingly to your needs.*

5. *What if you still could not find a solution to your problem, no matter how hard you tried. This would require one to take a step back and reconsider everything in your sphere of being. You will need to re-evaluate your belief system, core values because this could be a problem where the solution lies outside of your belief system. You might not be able to see solutions because you maintain certain beliefs that keep you blind and stuck. As such, you are unwilling to go beyond your belief system to explore new possible solutions. You might feel uncomfortable in trying out new things, new values, or beliefs. Einstein said that "A problem cannot be solved with the same mind that created it."*

Incredible things happen when we expand our beliefs to allow alternative options. I am not suggesting that you do anything illegal or unethical. I am suggesting that you release any disabling beliefs that have you imprisoned, and this can be done by asking yourself two important questions.

i) Identify the belief system that is keeping you stuck in this situation? Analyze all your thoughts, and unreasonable personal, professional, and religious beliefs to make sure they are not contributing to the problem. Explore all alternatives.

ii) Identify the alternative that is exactly 180 degrees opposite from your current belief system. Open your mind to other possibilities. Do not worry about the consequences, or benefits at this stage there will always be consequences and benefits – just identify the alternative.

In addition, identify what is holding you back from taking this step. Ask yourself questions such as,

- How bad can it be?

- Will life end tomorrow if I accept this solution?

- Can I live with the pain of change easier than the current pain?

- Can I live with the consequences of this solution?

- What are my fears in accepting this solution?

- How will I benefit by going ahead with this solution?

To Summarize this Concept

This concept has helped me to better deal with life's challenges. The 180 Degree Approach allows problems/challenges to be solved from a new perspective from what we are used to doing. It takes on a 180 degree turn from your current situation to introduce a new way of looking at things. Sometimes you are in a situation that requires a life change, and you are unable to find a solution to your problem. This could be because the solution lies outside of your belief system. That is certain values, and beliefs, keep you in a repetitive cycle. When a problem or challenge arises, you are stuck in the same belief system and keep coming to the same conclusion and thus the same solutions. You keep going in circles, trying to find a resolution, but unable to find one. This could be because we are not willing to let go of our belief system. The 180 Degree Principle helped me to think outside the box, that is by doing the 180-degree turn from my current belief system I was able to see the opposite side of a situation. This approach has allowed me to identify the belief system that is keeping me imprisoned. The 180 Degree Method allows me to analyze my religious beliefs, personal beliefs, and core values, and professional beliefs, and helps me to determine what is reasonable and what is not. In addition, it helps me to recognize what is keeping me tied to a situation and preventing me from taking the 180-degree turn. I ask myself, what are my biggest fears concerning this change? What is the worst that can happen If I go ahead with the solution? What are the benefits and consequences of this solution? By applying this approach in one's life they can open to new possibilities, and solutions, thus a new perspective on life.

Do not allow your fears to prevent you from seriously considering a viable solution. Weight the long-term benefits against the short-term pain. And yes, it will cause a certain amount of pain and discomfort to change, and things might seem bleak for a while, but hang in there it will soon pass. Just as everything passes. All good and bad things come to an end. Focus on the benefits of implementing this solution. Challenges come in all shapes and sizes, types, and degrees. Use these tools to enhance the way you deal with challenges. It brings on a different approach to problem-solving by breaking it down into smaller pieces and solving it step by step. Critical Thinking Skills enhances and empowers the quality of life and relationships opening new ways of thinking and dealing with problems. It reassesses your old belief systems and allows you to adjust and change them to your current situations.

In Conclusion, Critical thinking enhances and empowers an individual's quality of life and relationships. It opens new ways of thinking and dealing with problems. Now you can reassess your old belief systems, and make the necessary adjustments, and changes to your current situation. Now you have learned to deal with problems in a scientific, rational manner, to evaluate open-mindedly, and logically, and analyze all possibilities, to come to a sound conclusion. You can think for yourself responsibly, by taking responsibility for all your actions and choices past, present, and future.

Course 2
Segment 2 - Effective Planning & Scheduling
By Saiyra Akbar

An important skill that is useful in better dealing with life's challenges is Effective Time Management. This concept enables one to deal with daily activities efficiently and effectively. Time Management skills can be applied to both the professional, business world and personal life. Good time management skills indicate, working smartly in an effective time frame. It involves making a schedule to manage your time to efficiently operate the various duties involved. Research has shown that designing a Time Management Analysis Model is an essential tool for managing your time. It gives one control back and organizes their day efficiently. A technique that has been used in business management is the categorization of large data into groups. These groups are often marked A, B, C, and D or Quarters I, II, III, IV. To this course, we will use A, B, C, D. Activities are ranked by these general criteria:

A – Tasks that are perceived as being urgent and important.

B – Tasks that are important but not urgent.

C – Tasks that are unimportant but urgent.

D – Tasks that are unimportant and not urgent.

Each group is then rank ordered by prioritization of tasks

The Time Management Model divides the activities into four quadrants, depending on their importance and level of urgency. For example, the tasks that need my urgent and utmost attention fall into Time Management Analysis Model:

In box A: *These tasks included all urgent matters to be taken care of immediately, such as crisis, deadlines, and time-sensitive projects.*

In Box B: *These tasks include planning, prevention, work-day management, relationship building, relaxing/entertainment.*

In Box C: *includes all minor matters, that are not so important, such as calls/emails, interruptions, meetings, etc. It helps me to minimize time-wasting matters.*

In Box D: *I use to eliminate all things that are of no use and are wasting my time such as gossiping with friends, negative talk/thoughts, calls and emails, irrelevant work, etc.*

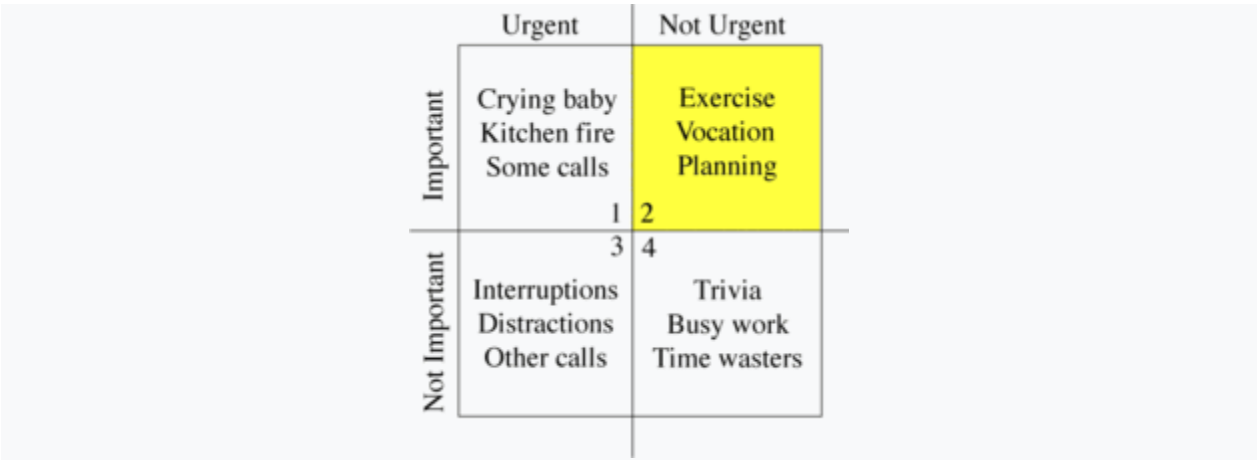
The Time Management Analysis Model helps me to identify my activities into their proper place and shows me how I am using my time by analyzing my tasks, activities within the Time Management Model, I can eliminate the timewasters, and meaningless ones from my routine, and manage my time effectively, and efficiently. The following is an example of the Time Management Model that can be used to manage your time efficiently.

Time Management Analysis Model

Box A: Urgent Matters that are Time Sensitive	*Box B: Important Matters*
Box C: Minor Matters	*Box D: Time Wasters*

The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_management gives the following model and some methods of Time Management,

"***The Eisenhower Method***



A basic "Eisenhower box" to help evaluate urgency and importance. Items may be placed at more precise points within each quadrant. The "Eisenhower Method" stems from a quote attributed to Dwight D. Eisenhower: "I have two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent." Note that Eisenhower does not claim this insight for his own, but attributes it to an (unnamed) "former college president." Using the Eisenhower Decision Principle, tasks are evaluated using the criteria important/unimportant and urgent/not urgent, and then placed in according quadrants in an Eisenhower Matrix (also known as an "Eisenhower Box" or "Eisenhower Decision Matrix"). Tasks are then handled as follows: Tasks in the Important/Urgent quadrant are done immediately and personally e.g., crises, deadlines, problems. Important/Not Urgent quadrant get an end date and are done personally e.g., relationships, planning, recreation. Unimportant/Urgent quadrant are delegated e.g., interruptions, meetings, activities. Unimportant/Not Urgent quadrant are dropped e.g., time wasters, pleasant activities, trivia. This method is inspired by the above quote from U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Note: However, that Eisenhower seems to say that things are never both important and urgent, or neither: So, he has two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important."

The same website gives another Time Management Method, which is as follow:

"POSEC method: *POSEC is an acronym for "Prioritize by Organizing, Streamlining, Economizing and Contributing". The method dictates a template which emphasizes an average individual's immediate sense of emotional and monetary security. It suggests that by attending to one's responsibilities first, an individual is better positioned to shoulder collective responsibilities. Inherent in the acronym is a hierarchy of self-realization, which mirrors Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Prioritize – Your time and define your life by goals.*

Organize – Things you must accomplish regularly to be successful (family and finances).

Streamline – Things you may not like to do but must do (work and chores).

Economize – Things you should do or may even like to do, but they are not pressingly urgent (pastimes and socializing).

Contribute – By paying attention to the few remaining things that have influence (social obligations)."

These tools can help you manage your time and enhance your personal and professional life.

Another simpler way to manage my time is to use a To-Do List, which identifies top priorities, to not so important tasks. I use both according to the amount of time I have. A daily list of things to do, numbered in the order of their importance are listed in the To-Do List and done in that order one at a time.

Course 2-Master's Degree Program

Segment 3-Establishing Goals

By Saiyra N. Akbar

Establishing and setting a goal is an important concept in achieving anything worthwhile in life, whether it be personal or professional. Goal setting requires critical thinking skills. Goal setting involves the development of an action plan designed to motivate and guide a person towards a specific goal. That is, you set a goal and steps to achieve them. Implementing goals can be used in solving complex problems, business, professional and personal goals, or anything worthwhile that we want to accomplish. By the process of setting goals breaks down the goal into smaller parts, so that they are more easily attainable. Below are some important points and benefits to goal setting.

- *Setting goals requires self-discipline, thought, and effort. All of which are part of critical thinking skills. It organizes your scattered thoughts to flow towards one goal.*
- *Setting goals brings value to the goal. Such as if the goal you intend to achieve is worthwhile, and in harmony with your core values and life purpose. Do you see a benefit in doing this?*
- *Writing your goals and reassessing them regularly makes them real because you give it energy, which makes it an active process.*
- *Setting goals also motivates one to achieve them, on time.*
- *Setting goals breaks down the project goal into smaller pieces. Which is more attainable than the whole?*
- *Setting goals brings your focus to completing a project.*

How to Set Goals

There are several ways to set goals. You set your goals on several levels. You begin by looking at the big picture and identify the large-scale goals that you want to achieve say in the next ten years. Then, you break these down into the smaller and smaller targets that you must hit to reach your goals. Once you have your plan, you start working on it to achieve these goals. The first step in setting personal goals is to consider what you want to achieve. The following are some categories that can help you set goals.

- *Career – What level do you want to reach in your career, or what do you want to achieve?*
- *Financial – How much do you want to earn, by what stage? How is this related to your career goals?*
- *Education – Is there any knowledge you want to acquire in particular? What information and skills will you need to have to achieve other goals?*
- *Health – Are there any athletic goals that you want to achieve, or do you want good health deep into old age? What steps are you going to take to achieve this?*
- *Social Service – Do you want to make the world a better place? If so, how?*

- *Spend some time brainstorming these things, and then select one or more goals in each category that best reflect what you want to do. Then consider trimming again so that you have a small number of significant goals that you can focus on. As you do this, make sure that the goals that you have set are ones that you genuinely want to achieve, not ones that your parents, family, or employers might want. If you have a partner, you want to consider what he or she wants. Remain true to yourself!*
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- ***Personal Goals***
- *Goals can be personal which includes losing weight, achieving good grades, and saving money. The strategy for goal setting begins with the overall picture-the main goal, then breaking it into smaller components, which allows one to focus on the primary goal. Once the main goal is set, breaking it up into smaller, more achievable parts aids in the planning portion of setting the goal. These smaller, more obtainable objectives promote self-esteem and provide instant feedback to keep the individual on task.*
-
- ***Professional Goals***
- *Professional goal setting encourages employees to put in substantial effort. Every employee has defined expectations for their role. For Example, it is the manager's job to constantly motivate the workers under him/her or keep track of an employee's work continuously. Goals are therefore an important tool for managers, as they help employees prioritize tasks. Furthermore, Goal setting affect individual performance to increase motivation, induce greater effort, work pace, creativity, and cognitive knowledge is activated. They are driven to work with more enthusiasm and energy.*
- *Once you have decided on your goals, it is essential to keep the goals dynamic by reviewing and updating them regularly. One can also periodically review the goals and modify them to reflect the changing priorities and experience. A useful way of making goals dynamic and effective is to use SMART Goals which is short for the following:*
- *S – Specific (or Significant).*
- *M – Measurable (or Meaningful).*
- *A – Attainable (or Action-Oriented).*
- *R – Relevant (or Rewarding).*
- *T – Time-bound (or Trackable).*
-
- *That is Choose specific goals that are significant, and meaningful to you. These goals should be realistic, thus making them attainable. They should also be time-sensitive and be of some relevance to you. You should feel rewarded once you have achieved the goal.*
- *"All who have accomplished great things have had a great aim, have fixed their gaze on a goal which was high, one which sometimes seemed impossible." Dr. Orison Swett Marden*
- *One of the first steps to achieving anything worthwhile in life is writing it down and making it your goal. By having real and clearly defined goals it makes your purpose clear and this concept has proven to be one of the greatest indicators of success. You can start by writing your goals down every morning or whichever time is suitable for you*

during the day. Start off by writing your spiritual goals and then family and friendship goals. After that, write down the number one thing you want to accomplish that day, and affirm it three times to make a pact with yourself, intending it to happen. Your overall life goals can be reviewed every day and adjusted accordingly. This allows you to keep your mind focuses on your vision and will lead to the success and achievement of your goals.

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- ***Course 2-Masters' Degree Program***
- ***Segment 4-Transform, Your Life Through Positive Thinking***
- ***By Saiyra Akbar***

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- *"The mind is a battlefield of endless thoughts-both positive and negative-that people fight daily. A constant tug of war we, as humans strive to overcome and struggle to hear God's truth in this chaotic culture." David and Andrea Logan White, Co-Founders of Pure Flix Entertainment*
- *In our current, technological times, many individuals are faced with depressive, isolated feelings, and thoughts. Every day we experience disappointments, fear of loss of a loved one or a job, or loss of anything important to us. We experience bad relationships, marital problems, worries, anxieties, and daily stresses. All these gradually begin to create a negative mindset. Our thoughts and emotions are continuously circulating those same thoughts and feelings into our blood, thus our mind and whole being. This eventually becomes a destructive cycle. This type of mindset creates bitterness, depression, feelings of isolation and loneliness, and many other mind/body disorders. Thoughts are energy and can become real things. They have the power to control all we do. Bobby Schuller says in his book, "Change Your Thought, Change Your World," that,*
- *"Learning to control thoughts is the key to a healthy mind. It is important not to allow negative thoughts-jealousy, blame, accusations, or others – to swirl around in our heads. They quickly and easily turn to bitterness and sin. By "thinking about what we think about," we can move from being a person of bitterness to a person of blessing. Our thoughts need to be trained. To get out of despair and stay out of depression, we must train our minds to focus on whatever is "true…noble…right…pure…lovely…admirable…excellent…or praiseworthy," as Philippians 4:8 says."*
- *To bring about a positive mindset we need to re-program our minds with positive thinking patterns. Bobby Schuller says in the same book, to bring about happiness and peace in our lives we need to train in our minds with the word of God, and the thoughts of God, Positive, uplifting words and affirmations fed to our unconscious mind will bring about a transformation of our thoughts. Schuller explains that training has to do with changing not only our conscious mind but also our unconscious mind as well. In his book "Change Your Thoughts, Change Your World," Bobby Schuller says,*
- *"All of us have both a conscious and an unconscious mind that are working at the same time, all the time. Training has to do with changing not only your conscious mind but our unconscious mind as well. What many refer to as "muscle memory" has truly little to do with the mind. Great piano players, for example, will tell you the worst thing they can do*

when performing a difficult piece is to think about what they are playing. Can you imagine a concert pianist playing Rachmaninoff thinking? Okay, I need to put this finger here, now press the peddle next? Whether it is a professional outfielder making an astonishing catch, an ice-skater doing a triple axel, or a kid riding her bike, most of our actions come from training the unconscious parts of our mind."

- *That is, most of our actions and behaviors come from the unconscious mind, therefore, to make a change we need to change it at the unconscious level. Schuller in the same book gives us twelve new*
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thoughts to inherit that can help transform our mind and thus our life for the better. The first thought is 'My life is the result of my thinking." By changing one negative thought you can create astounding results in your psyche. Nourish your mind with good and positive thoughts such as gratitude, kindness, love, compassion, forgiveness, this will lead to a joyful and prosperous life. The second thought to inherit that Bobby Schuller talks about is "God wants us to succeed." No matter what the odds are, success is achieving the big purposes and callings of your life. It means to keep on moving and pushing through the challenges, pain, and setbacks. If you have a dream, a calling, or a career you would like to pursue, then you should go for it. Do not let the naysayers dissuade you and do not blame others for your failings. Take responsibility for your actions. Schuller says in his book "Change Your Thoughts, Change Your World," that,

"Great achievers don't blame their parents, their colleagues, God, or their environment. Instead, they take as much responsibility for their lives as they can. They decide that if their lives are ever going to change, it is going to start with them. It is the kind of thinking that says, despite the pain, the unfairness, or the setback, I will get better, learn more, and change the plan so that it will create better results. Achievers are life-long learners committed to never giving up on growing. They relish feedback because they care more about getting better than they do about looking good. These are thoughts we ought to have if we are going to achieve great things..."

Take responsibility for all your actions and learn from your mistakes and move on by forgiveness. That is, overcome your weaknesses and learning from mistakes is all a part of growing in consciousness. The following are the remaining 'Thoughts to Inherit,' by Bobby Schuller from his book "Change Your Thoughts, Change Your World (for an in-depth explanation, I recommend you read his book).

- *Third Thought to Inherit is "God Favors me. Good things are coming."*
- *Fourth Thought to Inherit is "I am the Righteous of God-I am his beloved."*
- *Fifth Thought to Inherit is "I can break through overthinking by taking action now."*
- *Sixth Thought to Inherit is "Defining a clear vision, leads to fulfillment, joy, and achievement.*
- *Seventh Thought to Inherit is "Investing in myself is one of the best ways to invest in the people I love."*

- *Eight Thought to Inherit is "My body is a gift, even though it's imperfect.*

- *Ninth Thought to Inherit is "Every loss and challenge can be a doorway to a better version of me."*

- *Tenth Thought to Inherit is "Doing intimidating things will give me greater serenity in the long run (such as acts of courage).*

- *Eleventh Thought to Inherit is "I can relax and let go."*

- *Twelfth Thought to Inherit is "Bonding is my greatest need. There are people in my life who love me and want to know me better.*

These thoughts are key to changing the way you think as they can be used in meditation, prayers, or just as affirmations to train the mind to think beautifully. Healthy thoughts will help create a better world for you. It is up to you to decide how you use your mind. What you think is up to you. Learn to think positive, uplifting thoughts. Do not linger on negative thoughts and situations. You can make some positive changes by simply changing a few things you do in your daily life, such as stop listening to music with negative words and sound, such as heavy metal music and rap music with bad words in it. Instead incorporate positive uplifting music that motivates and inspires to calm, serene thoughts. Do not watch dark, negative thinking or negative oriented movies, and TV Shows, as these lead to shaping your thoughts and imagination towards the negative. If this seems so difficult to do, try to find balance in what you watch and listen to. Read books, articles on subjects that enhance the self, such inspirational stories, motivational speakers, read about people who have done great things, etc.

Other forms of positive thinking arise out of taking peaceful walks in nature, eating nourishing, wholesome foods, meditating, and praying to relax the mind, body, and soul with positive affirmations and thoughts. There are many resources that you can investigate to further your quest to perfect yourself. The following is a link to an e-book that can help stimulate your thoughts.

http://prenticemulfordthoughtsarethings.com/ThoughtsAreThings.pdf

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Course 3

Segment 1-Enhanced Living Concepts

By Saiyra Akbar and Shahir A. M.

Boundaries

"...you define your intangible boundaries and to recognize them as an ever-present reality that can increase you love and save your life. These boundaries define your soul, and they help you to guard it and maintain it." Henry Cloud & John Townsend, Boundaries

Every person has boundaries. Boundaries are simply an agreement with yourself as to what kind of behavior you will and will not accept from others. This means a healthy and stubborn adherence to act in the best interests of all concerned, but yourself first. Besides, for these reasons, we also set boundaries to protect ourselves as well as to have a healthy relationship with others and ourselves. You simply cannot have a healthy relationship with someone that has no boundaries. Furthermore, you not only have the right, but you have a responsibility to protect and defend yourself against aggressive people who do not respect boundaries.

The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_boundaries defines personal boundaries as,

"Personal boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave towards them and how they will respond when someone passes those limits. They are built out of a mix of conclusions, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, past experiences, and social learning. This concept or life skill has been widely referenced in self-help books and used in the counseling profession since the mid-1980s. According to some counselors, personal boundaries help to define an individual by outlining likes and dislikes and setting the distances one allows others to approach. They include physical, mental, psychological, and spiritual boundaries, involving beliefs, emotions, intuitions, and self-esteem. Jacques Lacan considered such boundaries to be layered in a hierarchy, reflecting "all the successive envelopes of the biological and social status of the person". Personal boundaries operate in two directions, affecting both the incoming and outgoing interactions between people. These are sometimes referred to as the "protection" and "containment" functions."

Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend talk about the importance of Boundaries. Most of us do not give the issue of boundaries a second thought until our boundaries have been crossed in a major way. And then we still do not give our boundaries the respect they deserve. If we do not respect our boundaries, why in the world would anyone else do so? In the book "Boundaries," Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend says that,

"Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins leading me to a sense of ownership. Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for gives me freedom. If I know where my yard begins and ends. I am free to do with it what I like. Taking responsibility for my life opens many different options."

Often our family, close friends overstep our boundaries, and we are forced to move our boundary stick back, sometimes even to our own expense. Verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse are all boundary violations for which there is never an excuse. In unhealthy relationships, we frequently overlook these violations to our detriment. Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend explain in their book, "Boundaries", that, "…each one should carry their load. Everyone has responsibilities that only he or she can carry." Each one of us is expected to carry our weight. Which includes how to deal with our feelings, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as the responsibilities that God has given to each one of us, even though it might take effort. This directly implies do not do for other's what they should and could do for themselves. Helping people in times of distress, tragedies and problems is a very noble thing to do, and it should be done. But as soon as your rights begin to get violated, it is time to step back. Further, in the same book, Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend say "that boundaries help us keep the good in and the bad out. They guard our treasures (Matt. 6:19-20). So that people will not steal them."

Boundary Violations

We all have our boundaries. Some people have flexible boundaries, while others have none, yet again where some have too many boundaries. An imbalance of boundaries is not a good thing. How about you? Are you so focused on someone else's dysfunction that the line between "Where you end, and they begin" is blurry and confused? Are you so focused on someone else's dysfunction that it owns you?

My definition of a boundary violation is 'Anyone who tries to control, change, undermine, or demean another person, or withhold something from them that is owed is overstepping their relationship boundaries. The number of boundary violations in an unhealthy relationship are many but let me outline a few examples. Some apply to all relationships, and some apply only to intimate relationships. Each one of the following boundary violations are examples of attempts to control, change, undermine, or demean you:

- *Ignoring you, not listening to you, constantly interrupting you, chronically finishing your sentences, or talking over you, berating you in private or in public, Invading your personal space*
- *Saying rude, hurtful, and disrespectful comments, e.g. "Your fat; You're ugly; You're a bitch /asshole, hate remarks (and worse)." Etc. Pressuring you to do something against your better judgment.*
- *Not contributing fairly to the relationship such as with household chores or finances.*
- *Hitting, slapping, pushing, pawing, or forcefully confining you in one place.*

Whether certain actions constitute a boundary violation depends on intent, context, circumstances, and whether you have given permission or not. For example, stealing a kiss or a hug from someone with whom you are in an intimate relationship is not a boundary violation, but trying it with a stranger is.

Boundary violations occur in relationships because the victim allows them. We allow boundary violations when we do not stand up for ourselves. This usually happens when we do

not stand up for ourselves because we have self-esteem and self-concept issues. Any healthy, self-complete person will never allow someone else to take advantage of them. Their attitude is, I will not walk on you, and I will not allow you to walk on me. When you feel your boundaries are violated, and are not sure, ask yourself, "Who's in charge in this situation?"

The answer to this question is easy. If your boundaries are violated regularly, the violator oversees you. If your boundaries are not violated regularly (even if attempts are made), then you are in charge. There will always be aggressive people around who will try to take advantage of you. Unfortunately, that's life. But by being complete within yourself, you will automatically thwart their attempts because you have self-esteem, not them-esteem. The key is to Remember that any self-possessed person cannot become possessed by anyone or anything else. If you find yourself spending time, running around, and attending to the needs of another adult when he or she should be doing it themselves, then you are not in charge of yourself, at least not completely. If you now realize that you have been partially or fully controlled by someone else, it is time to do something about it.

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

In this segment, we will discuss the process of reinventing yourself, regarding your boundaries and core values. Boundaries involve some factors that are founded on your belief system. If you want your outside world to change, you must first change your inside world. Therefore, to establish healthy boundaries, you must first figure out who you are. This includes the process of reinventing and re-creating yourself into a healthier individual, which involves transforming your inner Identity. The elements that go into establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries are the same elements that go into creating Self-Fulfillment (The Holistic Model for Healthy Living)

- *First, it is essential to know who you are, and why you are who you are (that is to examine your core values and belief system).*
- *Accept yourself unconditionally. Have high self-respect that is known and believe that you are worthy of respect and good treatment). Nurture healthy self-esteem and self-dignity.*
- *Take responsibility for your actions by establishing and protecting your boundaries.*
- *Respect your own free will and the free will of other people.*
- *Define and establish what behaviors and treatments you will and will not accept from others.*
- *Determine the consequences of your boundaries and establish how you will respond when someone attempts to violate your boundaries.*

In simpler terms, identify the boundary you wish to create. Communicate what you need by a short declarative statement. Analyze the consequences of the boundary and explain why this boundary is important to you. Keep your boundaries realistic as you do not want to overdo it.

Transforming Your Inner Identity

Most people's self-worth, self-esteem, and the way they see themselves are based on how others view them and what others expect of them, or what they believe others expect of them. In other words, their self-concept-and identities are based on external expectations and validation, rather than internal expectations and validation. Furthermore, they value what others think of them more than they value what they think of themselves. They are owned by these other people. That is, they do not have "self-esteem," they have "them esteem," which is defined as "self-worth based on what others think of them," In my opinion, there is no low self-esteem. We either have "self-esteem" or "them-esteem."

It is important to realize that self-esteem and self-confidence are not the same thing. Esteem means 'held in great regard, favored.' For example, think of someone you esteem highly. Now take that same feeling of esteem and apply it to yourself. Is the feeling still there? If not, you have "them-esteem," not "self-esteem." Them esteem means you do things to please others. Whereas self-esteem means how you esteem, regard, or respect yourself. It is a gauge of how worthy you feel. Self-esteem is defined as when an individual has healthy self-respect, high self-regard, and high self-worth of oneself, which is based on internal expectations and validation.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition Copyright 2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company, defines "Self-confidence." as "freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities."

To reinvent yourself, you must shift the source of your self-concept from external to internal-that is your self-esteem and self-confidence should stem from your inner belief about yourself not from the outer views, opinions of others. Shifting your views from external to internal does not necessarily mean that you are going to give up your good values; It just means that you are going to shift your inner foundation to your chosen, positive values, core beliefs, etc. This is a transformation of your identity called the "Inner Identity Shift." Shifting your identity upon which your very existence is based. In this process, you are breaking down the old way of thinking, believing, and feeling, and building a 'new you,' with a solid, more confident foundation. Your base foundation stems from the belief system, core values, characteristics, and life experiences. To change these elements is to change your identity. It is particularly important not to allow previous dysfunctional programming and indoctrination to influence your new foundation because it will weaken it.

Thus, to re-invent yourself, and Inner Identity Shift must take place, which is shifting from external validation and expectations to internal validation and expectations. The basic values to do this shift requires the following ingredients;(The same as The Meta-Holistic Model for Healthy Living Bachelor course 1, Segment 3)

- *Accept yourself unconditionally.*
- *Self-Responsibility – You are responsible for establishing your limitations and boundaries.*
- *Know who you are, and why you are, who you are – This includes a thorough evaluation of your belief and values.*
- *Have self-respect: You are entitled and worthy to have all the good things just like everyone else.*
- *Nurture healthy self-esteem and self-dignity.*
- *Respect your free-will and the free-will of others.*

- *Learn to forgive those who have harmed you.*
- *Establish responses to boundary violations.*
- *Practice Love and gratitude*

Reinventing Yourself

These values are used to re-invent and re-create yourself. The following are the steps to re-inventing and re-creating yourself. This action will redefine who you are and like a reset button will shift the foundation of your identity to a better version of yourself.

1. *Take a piece of paper or a notebook, along with a pen. You can name this book your Reinvention Notebook. Start by approaching this process from a third-person view. Remove yourself emotionally from this process and begin by saying, "I want this new person to have this core value or this belief." Write it down.*

2. *Now relax and calm your mind. Take some deep breaths to clear the mind. Now imagine what you want the new you to be like. What qualities, core values would you have, write them down. Ask yourself, "What do I want this person to be?" Do not let the views, expectations, and judgments of family, friends, workmates, and religious leaders or religious concepts affect you. Go deep within yourself and be who you want to be, include virtues as patience, compassion, kindness, loving, loyal, trustworthiness, etc. This should be the ideal person that you want to be, without any holds.*

3. *Once you have a list of core values, define the healthy limits for each value as "Healthy Limits", write the statement of your core value in the first person, this way your core value is in the present tense, and already a reality. For example, a core value and boundary clause would be as follow:*

    - *Core Value: Strong mental and emotional resources*
    - *Description: I focus my attention and emotional resources on things that are uplifting, up-building, positive, and success-oriented, rather than being negative.*
    - *Healthy Limits: I do not allow others to instill negativity in my life. I do not allow them to take my space in my head, by becoming obsessed with worries, concerns, and other negative talks. The new me focuses only on the positive and all that is good. I focus on strong, healthy, positive mental and emotional resources.*

    - *Core value: Self-Acceptance*
    - *Description: I accept myself just the way I am right here and right now, including my shortcomings and faults. I work on myself every day to be better than I was yesterday. I choose to feel good about myself, who I am, and who I am becoming every day. I routinely pat myself on the back for my daily victories. I am entitled to the same good things in life as anyone else-no more, no less. I have realistic expectations of myself, and I never take myself too seriously.*
    - *Healthy Limits: I seek to fulfill my expectations and not the expectations of others. My self-esteem is internally based, and not based on what others think of me, what*

they think of me is none of my business. I never allow others to rob me of my self-confidence and self-esteem.
(Up until now, you may have had "them-esteem," not "self-esteem." The new you now base your self-concept on your expectations. The new you now receive personal validation from within, not from without.)

- *Core Value: Self-Responsibility*
- *Description: I assume full responsibility for myself, my choices, and my actions. I also accept full responsibility for my underage children (if any) and to some extent my older children. I do not accept responsibility for any other adult. I do not expect anyone else to do for me that I could and should do for myself.*
- *Healthy Limits: I do not do for others that which they could and should do for themselves. I do not allow others to make me responsible for their actions and choices. I do not do things for others that enable them to be irresponsible. I do not feel guilty for the actions of another.*
  (Up until now, the former you may have accepted responsibility on some level for the actions of another adult. The new you now refuse to accept responsibility for anyone other than yourself and to some extent your loved ones.)

- *Core-Value: Respect for Free-Will/Control*
- *Description: I respect others' rights to be themselves and I do not attempt to control or change them in word or action. However, I do endeavor to have a positive impact on others. I do not give unsolicited advice to other adults unless they ask for it. I respect others' Human Rights of Free Will to run their own lives as they see fit so long as it does not adversely affect my life.*
- *Healthy Limits: I do not allow others to attempt to control or change me. I do not allow others to give me unsolicited advice. I do not allow others to "put me in a box" to suit their perspectives and beliefs. If I cannot accept another person for who he or she is, then I will not remain in a relationship with that person. If I can accept another person for who he or she is, then I do not complain about that person.*
  (Up until now, the former you may have tried futilely to change others close to you. The former you tried to put others in a box according to your wishes and beliefs, thereby denying them their right of free-will. The new you now refuse to control or change others knowing that such a task is impossible. Additionally, others may have made numerous attempts to control and/or change the former you. The new you now refuse to submit to anyone's attempts to change or controls you.)

- *Core Value: Trueness*
- *Description: I am true to myself and others, but myself first. I am also true to my principles and core values.*
- *Healthy Limits: I am never untrue to myself so I can be true to another. I do not allow others to determine who I am. I am willing to yield to others on occasion providing that the issue is only a matter of preference.*

(Up until now, the former you may have sacrificed yourself for the sake of another. The new you have now redefined this position. You may have also yielded far too often on matters of principle, the new you no longer yield to others on matters of principle or law. The new you no longer sacrifices' principles to keep the peace or keep the relationship going.)

- *Core Value: Unselfish*
- *Description: I am an unselfish person, always willing to freely give of myself and time when needed.*
- *Healthy Limit: I do not "give until it hurts." I am not unselfish to the extent of making it possible for others to be selfish with me, my time, and my resources.*
  (Up until now, the former you may have given so much of yourself to others that there is little left for you. The former you are worn out and emotionally depleted. The new you now refuse to give to others at the expense of yourself. The new you feel invigorated, empowered, and full of life!)

- *Core Value: Loyalty*
- *Description: I am loyal to others provided others are loyal to me. In the event there is a conflict of loyalties, I pledge to remain loyal to myself first and before anyone else. I will maintain my commitments provided those commitments do not make me or anyone else suffer.*
- *Healthy Limits: I reserve the right to rethink my commitments if they prove to be unsound. If another person is un-loyal to me. I will reassess my commitments.*

- *Core Value: Trustworthy*
- *Description: I can be trusted to say what I mean and mean what I say. I will never betray another's trust for any reason. I am trustworthy in following through on my commitments.*
- *Healthy Limits: If another person seriously betrays my trust, I will leave that relationship. If ever I choose to deviate from a mutually accepted path that could result in a betrayal of trust on my part, I will first discuss it with all parties concerned, but only if doing so does not cause harm.*

- *Core Value: Honesty*
- *Description: I am an honest person who does not cheat. I do not lie either directly, or by omission. I deal with others directly, forthrightly, and appropriately. When differences of opinion arise, I do not sidestep issues to avoid confrontation. I do not go around others without addressing the issue with them first.*
- *Healthy Limits: Dishonesty from others equals betrayal of trust to me. If others are dishonest with me, then I will no longer trust them to tell the truth. If the dishonesty is grievous, then I will not remain in a relationship with the dishonest/untrustworthy person.*

Step 4: In this section, you can now add disposition, demeanor, characteristics of the new you. An example would be, "I am upbeat, cheerful, and positive whether alone or

with others." What type of personality would you like to be, examples would be, "popular, fun, loving, cheerful, easygoing, intelligent, romantic, assertive, etc. Add all different characteristics that you want to be such as the level of fitness, weight, career, talents, intelligence level etc. along with their descriptions.

Step 5: Practice makes perfect. Everyday work on improving your new self. That is continuing to add core values and characteristics until you have exhausted every relevant issue. Then review your list out loud with conviction and review your Reinvention sheet or notebook every day for 40 days. It takes forty days to make a habit or break a habit. Remember to ignore any doubts, negative thoughts, and emotions that hinder you from creating a new you. Reaffirm your conviction every day, because by following this religiously you take your power and confidence back.

By the process of reinventing yourself, you have redefined your core values to the ones that you have chosen. Do not allow others to choose for you, as this is the "new you," and the new you is now based on internal validation. By learning, growing, and reinventing yourself, you become empowered. With this confidence, you will no longer be moving your boundaries back further and further. You will no longer be wondering where you end, and the other person begins. Furthermore, you will no longer allow your boundaries to be violated because of previous dysfunctional thinking and beliefs. You now have healthy boundaries in which you will not walk on others, but not allow others to walk on you either.

Respecting the Boundaries of Others

If you want others to respect your boundaries, then respect theirs also. Avoid violating other people's boundaries. Sometimes, we may not even realize that we are trespassing on someone's boundaries. For example, if someone offers to kindly help you with something, do not take it too far by continuing to ask him or her for favors. Many in the metaphysical world, are willing to help others. We just need to make sure that we do not violate their boundaries by taking undue advantage of their kindness. Do not wear out your welcome.

Another vital aspect of respecting boundaries is not to impose unreasonable boundaries on others. If you do, you will find yourself with few relationships as we refer to such people as dominating and selfish. This is an area where our rights and theirs may need to be negotiated. Since our boundaries are determined by our beliefs and core values, they affect our energy signatures. The changes you have made to your inside world are manifesting in your outside world. This also means that you will no longer be attracted to dysfunctional people in your life. You will automatically surround yourself with people who share your values and ideals because like attracts like. This also means that you may not be interested in a relationship with a particular person (if that relationship was negative) because you are no longer the person that was initially interested in him or her. Consequently, your relationship needs to be changed on some level. Good relationships are all about compatible boundaries as they are about compatible energy signatures.

Vibrational Energy Signatures

Everything in the universe is made of vibrational energy, thus each one of us is made up of a certain energy that makes us who we are. This is our energy signature, which is based on the vibrational energy of our thoughts, emotions, belief systems, values, etc. Edgar Cayce Quotes the book "There is a River' by Thomas Sugrue, "The human body is made up of electronic vibrations, with each atom and element of the body, each organ and organism, having its electronic unit of vibration necessary for the sustenance of, and equilibrium in, that particular organism."

Each thought we think, each emotion we feel carries a certain energy signature which becomes a part of our being. Therefore, if we go around with feelings of them-esteem, negative thoughts then that energy signature becomes our energy signature. The website https://in5d.com/change-your-energy-signature/ explains this concept, by describing how our whole universe is formed of energy, consciousness, and wisdom. As we begin to change our understanding of ourselves and the world around us, our vibrational spiritual energy changes and increases. This allows us to expand our consciousness and wisdom. It explains, "Expansion of consciousness helps us to see the presence of immutable Universal Laws that operate in our World. This deeper understanding takes us closer to our own Divine Self. One of the profound truths in our universe is that our world is a mirror! Our world reflects our inner being... Our Core Energy...Moment to moment we move within an energy 'bandwidth' of our own. This energy reflects, in every way, our present manifested moment. This core energy attracts circumstances and people into our lives that have similar kind of energy. Through our thoughts, we send out that energy signature to the universe."

Thoughts are things. Thoughts and emotions have energy, and the Universe responds in likeness by sending similar kinds of energies into our life. As we change our thoughts emotions, core values, and beliefs we change our energy, we change our world. Further on the same website https://in5d.com/change-your-energy-signature/, it says that "The easiest way to change your energy signature is to eliminate as much fear and negative energies from your life. This may involve refraining from hanging around those people of lower vibration, turning off the TV, or even changing your diet to higher vibrational foods. I would also highly recommend connecting to Mother Earth as much as possible. Recently, the Schumann Resonance (SR) went up to 8.90, the highest I have seen since I have been watching it. The SR is the resonance or "heartbeat" of Mother Earth and has been at 7.83hz for what many people believe to be thousands of years. This is proof that our planet is raising her vibration and she is allowing us to raise our vibration with her. When you raise your vibration, you change your energy signature!"

Another important aspect of being a metaphysician is not to try to change, control, or manipulate others. Any efforts made to change or control others will eventually fail, as nobody likes to be told what to do. This type of behavior violates the basic right of free-will. Everyone can do whatever they want. Trying to control or change another adult will cause friction and conflict leading to major arguments in a relationship. This includes not giving unsolicited advice. If the other persons' actions are causing harm, then share a concern. This will allow them to consider your concern and make the necessary changes. If they are unwilling to act and remain the same, then it

is advisable to discontinue the relationship with them. If in a conflict or problematic issue it is a simple matter of taste and preferences, it should not be imposed on others, they are too trivial to matter. All humans are entitled to their tastes and preferences. Instead of changing or controlling the other person, accept them for who and what they are, not for who you want them to be. Manipulation is another form of making an individual conform to fit your needs. But to a lesser degree. There are two types of manipulation which are as follows:

- *The first is healthy manipulation in which no one loses or gets hurt. It is a win-win situation. Exp- everyone does their fair share of the household chores, arranging your schedule to get a child from school, an appointment, etc.*
- *The second type of manipulation is unhealthy manipulation, which is never good, as it is a win-lose situation. Someone loses in some way, due to being denied their right to free-will. Unhealthy manipulation is tricking, lying, or using indirect schemes to get your way/gains.*

Using these tactics is a basic violation of their human rights and should be avoided. When we control others' we in a way take responsibility for them, which denies them their basic human rights of taking responsibility for themselves and exercising their right to freely choosing what they want to do. So, avoid manipulation and controlling others.

Adversity

Often, we deal with adversity in its many guises. For example, when we are dealing with clients facing problems, disappointments, fears, work-related problems, personal problems, or emotional and mental disturbances. These are adversities that we must overcome to grow into a better more whole person. Adversity teaches empathy and compassion as we can relate to others from our own experiences. It gives us wisdom, endurance, and challenges us to move forward from our emotionally immobile state of disorder to a more empowered state. It also brings on growth by learning the meaning of the adversity and by overcoming it. This way we learn from our mistakes and situations and have found the solution to our problem or chaotic situation, thus can move on. Adversity enables us to learn more about who we are and what we are capable of handling. It gives us strength in the face of hardships and brings hope that we do not have to remain and give in to a life of despair. We can take control of our lives and can become empowered.

Adversity gives one a greater understanding of human behavior and what motivates and drives it. It challenges one to face adversity daily and teaches us to overcome our fears, limitations, disappointments, so that we can continue to learn and grow, which leads to the enhancement of consciousness and existence. The human spirit is a powerful force, and we can use it to overcome adversity of all kinds. Even in the hardest situations and our human spirit could overcome. Tragedy can be turned into Triumph and human achievement. We can change our attitude in the face of adversity and overcome it. Change your mind and change your life.

Course 3 -Segment 2-Enhanced Relationships

By Saiyra Akbar & Shahir Ali

"Everything is energy. This fact is now being confirmed by scientists in the field of quantum physics. When we break everything down to the sub-atomic level, we find pure energy, not matter. This energy is always vibrating. Look around you. Everything you can see is vibrating; you are just not aware of it. Everything vibrates at a slightly different rate." https://mettahu.wordpress.com/tag/energy-signature/

To create a healthy and empowered relationship you must first know and accept yourself. That is, why you are who you are. Once you know who you are and why you are who you are, you will begin to understand why you have a good or bad relationship. We all have a certain energy signature that is built from our core values, beliefs, thoughts, and emotions gained from our past experiences. This is our internal state which we mirror into our outer world. This reflection from the internal to the external is called External Replication. Everything in our life, our world, reflects what we are inside of ourselves. We emit an energy signature that attracts others' who are compatible energies signatures of the same frequency. That is, like attracts like. This means that they have similar interests/beliefs/values, which create similar energy patterns.

Two people can have similar energy signatures and be vibrationally compatible, but have a toxic, dysfunctional relationship. This is because having a similar energy signature (similar energetic vibrations) does not necessarily mean having a healthy relationship. It just means that you are on the same wavelength. So, the question arises, why do we stay in a bad relationship? Regardless of good or bad relationships, there is always a benefit to remain in a relationship. The first reason why we stay in a toxic relationship is that we gain an energetic balance by being on the same wavelength. Simply put our energies are compatible, regardless of if they are good or bad for us. For example, when a neglected child throws a temper tantrum to get his parents attention. The temper tantrum is a primary action that benefits the child because by this action, regardless of whether its reprimanding or loving, he gets his parents attention in this way, this is the secondary gain.

Primary Gain are gains that result from an action that releases inner conflict, distress, or tensions. An individual's desire to relieve anxiety to feel better. Whereas Secondary Gains are gains that are the result of the primary gain action, which are gaining of attention and support.

If this type of behavior is not corrected with care and love, this habit will continue, and as the child grows into an adult, he will attract others (friends, spouses) with similar feelings, and experiences, which in turn creates unhealthy relationships.

The second reason that we stay in a toxic relationship is that on an unconscious level, we are comfortable with our energy signature, we like ourselves just the way we are and are unwilling to go through the discomfort of changing ourselves, that is why we remain on that frequency level. We resist change, because it takes us out of our comfort zone, and brings us to the level of experiencing fear, loss of control from that familiar feeling of being safe on that level.

On the other hand, we have the concept of 'opposites don't attract'. We are led to believe that opposites attract each other, but that is far from the truth. In fact, opposites repel each other.

People with opposite energy signatures cancel each other out, therefore no relationship is possible. People with opposite energy signatures, usually tend to avoid each other as they have nothing in common.

So how do we change or improve our energy to enhance the quality of our life and relationships? We do this by changing our energy frequency, which can be done by shifting our internal beliefs, values, and validation - our self-concepts. We can do this by transforming our Identity foundation, by education and introspection, by learning and growing in our level of consciousness. By applying enhanced principles that we have learned to our life, we change ourselves, thus our energy signatures.

To have a compatible, healthy relationship you need to realize that every person deserves to be respected and that they have the right to free-will, and can choose, and make decisions for themselves. There is a general rule of respecting others, which states that "You cannot control or change anyone other than yourself." Controlling others is a serious boundary violation which causes one to lose trust and respect in others. That is, we tend to avoid, and fear people who are trying to control us. This ends up creating bad relationships whether they be professional or personal. Also, do not give unsolicited advice to anyone, only when they ask for it, then advise them. Have realistic expectations of others, and accept them for who they are, and not for their human differences. Furthermore, respect others' rights and boundaries, and make efforts not to take advantage of others. All relationships should and must be win-win or they will not last. Everything in our life revolves around relationships, so strive to create better, more lasting relationships, as it is one of the essential aspects of living and working in a community. The quality of the relationship with family, friends, others, and even yourself defines who you are. Relationships also depend on our energy signatures. We are usually attracted to others who have similar interests, similar energies as we do. I have learned that we all emit a unique energy signature to the universe, which is based on our internal self- concepts, core values, beliefs, assumptions, and validations. Our energy signatures attract others with similar, compatible energy signatures. That is like attracts like. So, keeping this in mind we can learn to create enhanced, lasting relationships.

Enhanced Relationships

Building relationships is an important aspect of our daily life and is the key to dealing with and communicating with others on a personal and professional level. I have learned to apply the Three Essential Questions to every relationship in my life. This helps me to build solid, more enduring relationships. By implementing the Three Essential Questions for all my social, personal, and professional relationships I can see where I stand. For each relationship I ask myself the following:

i. *What do I bring to this relationship? Answering this question requires that I allow myself for an honest self-examination of why would someone want to be in a relationship with me?*
ii. *And then ask myself why would they not want to be in a relationship with me? This enables me to analyze my positive and negative traits and make a conscious adjustment where it is needed.*

iii. The third question I ask myself is what does the other person bring to this relationship? I honestly, logically, and rationally analyze the traits, characteristics, and values of the other person without judgment. This allows me to analyze the positive and negative traits of the other person and give me a good picture of the relationship.

As a result of this analysis, I can conclude where the relationship stands, and what changes are necessary from both sides to make the relationship healthier. However, there is a drawback to this approach, which is, in assuming that the other person will agree to the self-examination or the adjustments. They might disagree, so in this case, I will have to accept whatever they decide on, as it is their human right of free will. We can either continue to stay in an unhealthy relationship or the relationship is over. The most common fatality here is continuing an unhealthy relationship because they are with longtime friends, family members, a longtime intimate relationship, or a superior at work. When this happens the most vital, life-changing element to consider is: "Anytime someone takes more from a relationship than he or she gives and is unwilling to change, the relationship is over."

A healthy relationship requires mutual trust, respect, and responsibility. If one person is doing everything, and the other not carrying his/her burden, or doing their share, a relationship becomes imbalanced. This eventually leads to conflict, resulting in toxic, unhealthy relationships. You must show high honor, respect to yourself, and end the relationship. The three relationship questions should be an essential philosophy to your existence. These qualities can help clear your thinking and help you to make appropriate decisions logically and rationally. The three relationship questions can be applied to all relationships in your life, including:

- ***Business Partnership:*** *A business partner who takes more than he/ she gives and refuses to change. This is an unhealthy partnership and will eventually lead to disastrous results, which will dissolve in time. It is better to take action to avoid unnecessary stress and leave the partnership.*
- ***Professional Relationships:*** *A professional relationship in which one side takes more than they give and refuses to change this way of life. Find someone else to do the job.*
- ***Employee Management:*** *you are the management team at your workplace and are wondering whether you should fire or keep an employee who is not doing their share. This employee refuses to change and takes more than his/her share. It is better to dismiss him/her, as you protect the business assets and guard against other employees becoming disillusioned by management inaction.*
- ***Customer Management:*** *A customer who is constantly complaining and never satisfied with anything you do to please him/her. Doing business with them is costing you more in time and money and the added stress. Break this relationship.*

All in all, looking at all your current relationships with the three relationship questions in mind, you become aware of the parts of you that need to take away or transformed to create a

healthier relationship. You will also become more aware of your assets and cherish the good qualities in you and the other person.

Protecting Your Relationship Boundaries

Another important aspect of building healthy relationships is to create and protect your boundaries. Everyone has boundaries. We all have our beliefs, limitations, and core values that we need to consider when having a healthy relationship. For some these boundaries could be non-existent, negligent, or flexible, while for others they are the most important aspect of the relationship. The first thing to determine is what is a boundary violation. A boundary violation is "Any attempt to control, change, undermine, or demean another person." The following are some common boundary violations that should be avoided to have an enhanced relationship:

- *Berating or demeaning you in public or private.*
- *Not listening to you, interrupting you and finishing your sentences, or talking over you.*
- *Invading your personal space.*
- *Saying rude, hurtful, and disrespectful comments.*
- *Giving unsolicited advice.*
- *Pressuring you to do something against your better judgment.*
- *No contributing to the relationships, household chores, or finances.*
- *Physically abusive, hitting, pushing, and forcefully confining you in one place.*

Boundary Violations occur in a relationship because we have allowed them to occur by not standing up for ourselves. This happens because we rely on external expectations and validations. A person with healthy self-esteem will never allow boundary violations to occur. A self-fulfilled person will protect their boundaries by the motto "I will not walk on you, and nor will I allow you to walk on me." When boundary violations occur, it is important to put a stop to them. This can be done by being assertive and fair in any situation, ask yourself if you are honest, direct, and empathetic, and display a win-win attitude. Assertiveness will help you deal with boundary violations in an effective resolving manner. Assertively resolving a conflict means a positive, peaceful resolution to the conflict. So, the first thing to do is realize when a situation occurs, and what do we do? How do we react? For example, if someone gives a derogatory and demeaning remark. To defend ourselves we react by either insulting them or staying quiet and avoiding them. Our reaction is instinctive, fight, or flight to defend ourselves. But do we have to react defensively? No, we do not. We can instead be a self-complete person and respond assertively. Responding means we think first. You are free to deal with the matter, immediately, later, or never. It is entirely up to you. You can just not deal with it, which means the relationship is over. If you are going to respond, do it promptly. Here is where you set boundaries and an assertive response to go with it. Thus, you must be able to answer the following questions:

- *What specific behavior are you responding to?*
- *What was your reaction, feelings, and thoughts to this behavior?*
- *Basically, how did you feel when this happened?*

- *What resolutions do you want?*
- *What are you willing to do to get a resolution? For example, speak up for yourself.*
- *When should you address this boundary violation, right away, later when you are alone?*
- *What will happen if you say nothing?*

Now you can create a model to develop an assertive response to a boundary violation. You can divide it into the following:

- *The specific behavior (the boundary violation)*
- *Your response to it, "When you (specify the boundary violation) I feel (describe the feeling you get when the boundary violation occurs). Your response should 'Can I ask you to not do that in the future?' (Respond with something assertive).*
- *Action is taken if the behavior continues.*
- *For example, when you constantly interrupt me, I feel frustrated, because I cannot express myself. Can I ask you to let me finish without interruption? If this behavior continues then I will have to reassess whether to continue the relationship or not.*

By instilling this type of assertive response in your daily life, you can establish a response to most boundary violations and at the same time, you protect boundaries assertively. Sometimes some people will not back off and continue with their current demeaning, aggressive, or abusive behavior. In this case, you have no choice but to discontinue the relationship.

The people who violate your boundaries the most are the ones closest to you. Ending those types of relationships is much harder, but it should nevertheless be done if the person will not stop.

The following website has a document that is very helpful in establishing healthy boundaries, file:///C:/Users/15144/Downloads/establishing-healthy-boundaries-in-relationships.pdf, which is as follows;

Establishing Healthy Boundaries in Relationships (Adapted by C. Leech from "Tools for Coping with Life's Stressors" from the Coping.org website)

People with low self-esteem have major difficulties in relationships with others. This is because they are unable to establish healthy boundaries or limits with people. The reason, for this inability, is that with low self-esteem comes a variety of irrational thoughts, emotions, and actions that lead people to lose themselves in relationships with others. This absorption of self into others leads to a loss of personal internal control. People with low self-esteem have a weakened "internal locus of control" and become dependent on a "strong external locus of control". They become victims of being controlled by how others think, feel about and act towards them. People with low self-esteem are dependent on others' approval and recognition and are therefore fearful of rejection by and conflict with others.

How about your relationships?

- *How well are your physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual boundaries established and maintained in your relationships?*

• How successful are you in protecting and maintaining your boundaries when your relationship partners are highly intrusive or persistent?

Do you use unhealthy, compulsive, or addictive behaviors as a barrier or unhealthy boundary to protect yourself from intimacy with your relationship partners?

• How well do you stay unhooked and detached when your relationship partners are working you over to lower your boundaries in the relationships?

• When you consider trying to maintain healthy boundaries in your relationships without the use of body weight, food, or some other compulsive behaviors to protect and medicate you in the process, are you scared?

• Would you prefer to stay stuck on learning how to establish healthy boundaries in your relationships? If the answer is that you need to strengthen your boundaries with your relationship partners to enrich or regain the health of your relationships, then read on. To maintain healthy intimacy in your relationships, you will need to first identify whether you have healthy intimacy in your current relationship(s) at this time. That is, you have established healthy intellectual, emotional, and physical boundaries with your relationship partners.

Characteristics of a Healthy Intimate Relationship The goal in an intimate relationship is:

• To feel calm, centered, and focused.

• The intimacy needs to be safe, supportive, respectful, nonpunitive (not intended as a punishment), and peaceful.

• You feel taken care of, wanted, unconditionally accepted, and loved just for existing and being alive in a healthy intimate relationship.

• You feel part of something and not alone in such a relationship.

• You experience forgiveness and being forgiven with little revenge or reminding of past offenses.

• You find yourself giving thanks for just being alive in this relationship.

• A healthy intimate relationship has a sense of directedness with plan and order.

• You experience being free to be who you are rather than who you think you need to be for the other.

• This relationship makes you free from the "paralysis of analysis" needing to analyze every minute detail of what goes on in it.

• Has its priorities in order, with people's feelings and process of the relationship coming before things and money.

• Encourages your personal growth and supports individuality.

Use the following questions with your relationship partner(s) to discuss the issue of intimacy:

1. Does our relationship sound, look, and feel like this description?

2. What factors impede our ability to have this kind of relationship?

3. Do we have a good time together, but fail at being emotionally, spiritually, and physically intimate?

4. Do we have an openly affectionate relationship with healthy emotionally based communication, or do we just do things together, with no communication or affection giving?

5. How important is it to you to have healthy intimacy in our relationship?

7 Emotional Hooks in Relationships

1. Lack of Individual Identity

2. Guilt

3. Manipulation Through Sympathy from Spouses

4. Helplessness and Neediness of Relationship Partners

5. Belief that "Time Will Make It Better"

6. Fear of Negative Outcomes for Relationship Partners

7.Idealism of Fantasy Thinking

*1**. **Lack of Individual Identity:** You are hooked by the irrational belief that: "I am a nobody without somebody in my life." If you are, you maintain no boundaries with your relationship partners because you are very dependent on getting your identity from being with your partners. You are willing to do whatever it takes to make the relationships happen, even if you must give your healthy, money, security, identity, intelligence, spiritual beliefs, family, country, job, community, friends, values, honor, and self-respect. The rational message needed to establish healthy boundaries from this hook is: "I am somebody, just by being who I am. I am OK just the way I am, even if I do not have my relationship partners in my life. My value and worth as a person are not dependent on having one or more significant others in my life. I should be on my own and healthy than to be with my relationship partners and be sick emotionally, intellectually, or physically. I will work diligently with my relationship partners to correct this faulty thinking, which has made me too dependent. By being more my person, my relationships will flourish and grow healthier.*

*2. **Guilt:** You are hooked by irrational guilt that you must think, feel, and act in ways to ensure that your relationships are preserved, secured, and nurtured no matter what personal expense it takes out of you. You have a problem of feeling over-responsible for the welfare of your partners and cannot allow your partners to accept personal responsibility, to make choices, and live with the consequences of these choices. This irrational guilt is a driving motivation to keep you tearing down your boundaries so that you will always be available to your relationship partners at any time, in any place, for whatever reason your partners "need" you. The rational message needed to establish healthy boundaries from this hook is: "My relationship partners and I are responsible for accepting personal responsibility for our own lives and to accept the consequences for the choices we make in taking care of our own lives. I am not responsible for the outcomes, which result from the choices and decisions, which my partners make. My partners and I are free to make our own decisions with no one forcing us to make bad ones which will result in negative consequences to ourselves if they should occur".*

*3. **Manipulation Through Sympathy from Spouses**: You might be hooked by the inability to differentiate between love and sympathy or compassion for your relationship partner. You find yourself feeling sorry for your relationship partner. This makes you think that you are in love with them. The bigger the problems your relationship partners have, the bigger the "love" seems to you. Because the problems can get bigger and more complex, they succeed in hooking you to lower your boundaries so that you begin to give more and more of yourself to your spouse out of the love you feel. The rational thing to do here is to establish healthy boundaries such as: "It is ok to have sympathy and compassion for my partner, but that does not mean that I must sacrifice my principles, integrity to "save" or "rescue" my partner." The ability to feel sympathy and compassion for another human being is a nice quality of mine and I will use it in a healthy and non-emotionally hooked way in my relationships.*

*4. **Helplessness and Neediness of Relationship Partners:** You get hooked by the neediness and helplessness of your partner. You find yourself hooked when your partner gets into self-pity, "poor me" and "how tough life has been". You find yourself weak when your relationship partners demonstrate an inability to solve personal problems. You find yourself wanting to teach and instruct when your partner demonstrates or admits ignorance of how to solve problems. You find yourself hooked by verbal and non-verbal cues, which cry out to you to "help" your partner even though your partner has the competence to solve the problem on their own. You find yourself feeling warmth, caring, and nurturing feelings, which help you tear down any shred of boundaries you once had. These sad, weak, distraught, lost, confused, and befuddled waifs are so needy that you lose all concepts of space and time as you begin to give and give and give. It feels so good. The rational message needed here is: "No one is helpless without first learning the advantages of being helpless. Helplessness is a learned behavior, which is used to manipulate me to give of my resources, energy, time, effort, and money to fix. I am a good person if I do not try to fix and take care of my partners when my partners are acting helpless. I cannot establish healthy intimate relationships with my partners if I am trying to fix or take care of them all the time. I need to put more energy into fixing and taking care of myself if I find myself being hooked by my partners' helplessness".*

*5. **Belief that Time Will Make It Better:** You get hooked by the belief that "If I give it enough time things will change to be the way I want them to be". You have waited a long time to have healthy intimate relationships, you rationalize: "Don't give up on them too soon". Since you are not sure how to have them on how they feel, you rationalize that what the relationship needs is more time to become healthier and more intimate. You find yourself giving more and more of yourself and waiting longer and longer for something good to happen and yet things never get better. What keeps hooking you are those fleeting moments when the relationship approximates what you would like it to be. These fleeting moments feel like centuries, and they are sufficient to keep you holding on. The rational message needed to establish healthy boundaries is: "It is unhealthy for me to sacrifice large portions of my life, invested in relationships that are not going anywhere. It is unhealthy for me to hold on to the belief that things will change if they have not in 1 or more years. It is OK for me to set limits in my relationships, such as: if in 3 months or 6 months things do not get to be intimately healthier then I am getting out of them, or we will need to seek professional help to work it out. It is OK for me to put time demands on my relationships so that I do not waste away my life waiting for something, which in all probability will never happen. It is NOT OK for me to blow out of proportion those fleeting moments in my relationships which make me believe that there is anything more in them than there is".*

***6. Fear of Negative Outcomes of Relationship Partners:** You are hooked by the fear of the possible negative future outcome if you are not deeply involved in taking care of and fixing your relationship partners. You may be aware of the hooks that keep your boundary-less with your partners. Yet you are afraid to LET GO of the control you have with your partners for fear something terribly negative might happen to them. You fear that your partners would become homeless, hungry, jobless, poor, lonely, scared, go to jail, or worse yet die if you do not continue to fix and take care of their needs. You are being emotionally blackmailed and may even have heard threats of suicide if you say you want to change or get out of the relationships the way they are. The rational message needed here is: "I am only responsible for my life. No one can make me responsible for my partner's life. I can choose to feel responsible for my partner's life, but I cannot control or determine the outcome of their life no matter how hard I try. I am powerless to control other people, places, things, and conditions. The only thing I can control is my thinking, feeling, and actions. It is OK for me to expect my partners to accept personal responsibility for their own lives. It is OK to require my relationship partners to accept the consequences for their actions, choices, and decisions".*

*7. **Idealism or Fantasy Thinking:** You are hooked by the fantasy or ideal about how it is supposed to be. You have an ideal, dream, or image in your mind of how relationships are supposed to be or how they should be, and you have a difficult time accepting them the way they are. You work hard at making your relationships approximate your idealized fantasy. You put a great deal of time, energy, and resources into making them become a reality. Unfortunately, the more you give and give, the fantasy never becomes a reality you are wishing for. You seem brainwashed into believing that it is possible even though all your efforts have not made it happen, after years and years of effort on your part. You get hooked into waiting for the "big pay-off" down the road if you just stick with your relationships. The rational message needed here is:*

"I must accept reality the way it is rather than how I want it to be. I will give my support system permission to call me on it if I am hooked into fantasy relationships and lose myself in them. I will work hard to stay reality-based and keep myself from losing my objectivity and contact with the way things are. I am human and subject to making mistakes and failing and I will forgive myself if I make a mistake in my efforts to establish healthy intimate relationships with my relationship partners. Once I give up the delusion that things are the way they are supposed to be, I will work with my partners to try to correct the problems in our relationships".

Relationship Checklist

Ten Ways to have a good relationship from the website powerofpositivity.com

1. *Listen without interrupting*
2. *Speak without accusing*
3. *Give without sparing*
4. *Share without pretending*
5. *Enjoy without complaining*
6. *Trust without wavering*

7. *Forgive without punishing*
8. *Pray without ceasing*
9. *Answer without arguing*
10. *Promise without forgetting*

Healthy Relationships Checklist: Ask yourself if you are doing the following:

1. *Cooperation*
    a. *Asking not expecting*
    b. *Willing to accept change*
    c. *Making decisions together*
    d. *Willing to compromise*
    e. *Win-win resolution to conflict*

2. *Trust*
    a. *Accepting each other's words*
    b. *Giving the benefit of the doubt*

3. *Honesty*
    a. *Communicate openly and honestly*

4. *Accountability for your actions.*
    a. *Accepts responsibility for behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, and values.*
    b. *Admits mistakes and seeks to make amends.*

5. *Respecting Boundaries*
    a. *Respecting each other's personal space*
    b. *Not manipulating or intimidating to get your way*
    c. *Support each other's difference and choices*
    d. *Listening non-judgmentally*
    e. *Being understanding*
    f. *Valuing each other's opinion*

Course 3
Segment 3- Modern Day Spiritual Enlightenment & Mysticism
By Saiyra N Akbar and Shahir A. A. Shah A.M.

"Knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is enlightenment." Lao Tzu

This segment is about Enlightenment and mysticism, which opens us to all possibilities and discoveries. As enlightened and mystical beings, we are self-fulfilled individuals, and we can perfect our lower human qualities to nobler ones. Enlightenment can be used to help individuals to attain self-fulfillment and awakening from ignorance and their limitations. That is to expand our horizons by expanding our thinking and reasoning skills. This also includes to become aware of our experiences and understanding the lessons behind them.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enlightenment_(spiritual)

"*The English term enlightenment is the western translation of the abstract noun bodhi, the knowledge or wisdom, or awakened intellect, of a Buddha. The verbal root budh- means "to awaken," and its literal meaning is closer to "awakening." Although its most common usage is in the context of Buddhism, the term buddhi is also used in other Indian philosophies and traditions. The term "enlightenment" was popularized in the Western world through the 19th-century translations of Max Müller. It has the western connotation of a sudden insight into a transcendental truth or reality."*

In the western world the concept of spiritual enlightenment has become synonymous with self-realization and the true self and false self, being regarded as a substantial essence being covered over by social conditioning. Further to our discussion, the website describes Enlightenment, https://www.meditation-presence.com/teaching/enlightenment/, as:

"*There are different degrees of enlightenment, from a small change in the state of being and consciousness that may elude the seeker at the beginning of its manifestation within him/her, to the highest and exceedingly rare experience, during which he/she will recognize, with no possible doubt, the Ineffable that he/she carries within him/her. Enlightenment may, after a certain period of meditation practice, sometimes manifest itself in a very sudden manner and at the most unexpected moment (everything depends on the levels of being and consciousness of the meditant) or slowly, by stages, as a subtle modification of the state of being and consciousness, accompanied from the beginning by an inner awakening that, at first, may remain un-comprehended by the aspirant."*

Mysticism means the study of the mysterious. "Mysticism" originated from Ancient Greece. The word Mystikos meant "to conceal", and 'an initiate'. In the Hellenistic world, a "mystikos" was an initiate of a mystery or secret religion. "Mystical" referred to secret sacred, spiritual rites.

In Antiquity, Mystikos/Mystical had three aspects to it, which later became intertwined. The three aspects were the scriptures, the liturgical and the spiritual or contemplative. The scripture aspect refers to "hidden" or allegorical interpretations of scriptures. The liturgical dimension refers

to the liturgical mystery of the Eucharist, the presence of Christ at the Eucharist. The final and third dimension is the contemplative or experiential knowledge of God.

Enlightenment and Mysticism Around the World

Buddhism

In Buddhism traditions the followers are taught to reach the state of Nirvana. Their religion follows a path of spiritual development and gaining knowledge of the self and the true nature of life. They believe that everything in existence is impermanent, that nothing is fixed-everything is subject to change. The website www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/ataglance/glance, states that,

"Buddhists believe that nothing is fixed or permanent and that change is always possible. The path to enlightenment is through the practice and development of morality, meditation, and wisdom. Buddhists believe that life is both endless and subject to impermanence, suffering and uncertainty.

The impermanence of reality brings on the truth that nothing lasts forever. It is our mistaken belief that we can hold on to our reality, as it is, forever. This belief is the major reason for human suffering. Buddhism came into being when the Buddha (Awakened One), Siddhartha Gautama decided to go on a spiritual journey in search for a solution to end human suffering, and to find liberation from the continuous cycle of births, deaths, and rebirths. He experienced several paths of ancient wisdom, and finally learned that to overcome human suffering, one needs to live a life of balance. So, he preached his truths based on "The Middle Path", which contained aspects of the ascetic and material world. The Middle Way followed a two set of teachings, called the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths. This path is of the noble people…which is known as the eightfold path of the noble ones.

The Noble Eightfold Path

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of eight practices that each follower must know and incorporate in their lives. The following is a brief description of the eight practices:

1. ***Right Mindfulness**: Is being aware of what one is doing. That is being conscious of your actions, thoughts, feelings, and senses. It encourages one to never be absent-minded, rather being mindful gradually results in the realization that nothing is permanent. The body, your situation, state of being, even your beliefs and values are impermanent-That is always changing.*

2. ***Right View**: Is to know and realize that all our actions have consequences in life and/or after death.*

3. ***Right Resolve/Intention**: To live a life of humility and peaceful co-existent. For the more advanced aspirant, this concept aims at renunciation into an environment of purity(non-sensuality), peace and goodwill towards others, and be devoid of cruelty. This practice may lead one into higher states of contemplation and understanding of the impermanence of things and suffering of humanity.*

4. ***Right Speech:*** *Is not to tell lies, focusing on positive speech and phrases, do no harm with your speech, exp., Do not say words that hurt others. Do not be-little others with rude, harsh remarks, etc.*

5. ***Right Conduct/Action:*** *Do no harm to others, no killing or hurting of others, no stealing or sexual perversity.*

6. ***Right Livelihood:*** *Earn a living by doing right and no harm. Working at jobs that benefit others. Exp. It would be considered wrong to get livelihood by the selling of drugs, which causes great harm to people.*

7. ***Right Effort:*** *Involves using your efforts in a positive, holistic way. Meaning using your mental, emotional, and physical senses in a positive way when trying to do something. Usually, whenever we set out to do something worthwhile, we are met with some hindrance or obstacle that prevents from completing the task with our whole self or whole positive effort. For example, when one initiates a meditation practice they are usually hindered by obstacles, in the form of thoughts or tasks. The website www.enwikipedia/Five_hindrances, states that hindrances are "...difficult energies which arise in the mind..." Further on the same website contemporary Theravada scholar Nina Van Gorkam says that "The hindrances are obstructions, overwhelming the mind, weaking insight {...}. The hindrances obstruct the development of what is wholesome."*
   The five hindrances are described on the website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_hindrances, as.

   "a. Sensory data: The wanting that seeks for happiness through the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and physical feeling.

   b. Ill-Will: All kinds of thought related to wanting to reject; feelings of hostility, resentment, hatred, and bitterness.

   c. Sloth-and-Torper: Heaviness of body and dullness of the mind, which drag one down into disabling inertia and depressive state of being.

   d. Restlessness-and-worry: The inability to calm the mind.

   e. Doubt: Lack of conviction or trust."

   To overcome these hindrances, you need to understand them by first recognizing the hindrance and then accepting and investigating the nature of the hindrance, and then letting it go, by saying it yourself that 'it is not who you are, it is just a passing fancy, you are deactivating the hindrance.

8. ***Right Samadhi:*** *Means one-pointed concentration in conscious meditative states. The website www.translation.babylon-software.com/english/samadhi, define samadhi as, "...a*

> *state of meditative consciousness. It is a meditative absorption or trance, attained by the practice of dhyana. In samadhi the mind becomes still." Thomas Berry (1992), Religions of India: Hinduism, Yoga, Buddhism, Columbia University Press, states that Dhyana, is "sustained attention" and the "application of mind to the chosen point of concentration".*

The noble eightfold path: right view, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, is the ancient path, the ancient road, traveled by the Rightly Self-Awakened ones of former times. The Buddha says that "I followed that path. Following it I came to direct knowledge of aging & Death, direct knowledge of the origination of aging & death, direct knowledge of the cessation of aging & death, direct knowledge of the path of the path leading to the cessation of aging & death. I followed the path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of birth, form, and consciousness, direct knowledge of the cessation of consciousness, direct knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of consciousness."

The Four Noble Truths

The Four Noble Truths explain the truth of suffering and it is causes. It leads one to the truth on how to end suffering. The suffering of humanity is two-fold: Physical and Mental.

***The First Noble Truth**: Recognizes the presence of suffering.*

***The Second Noble Truth**: Focuses on recognizing the cause of suffering. What is the true cause of suffering-our desires, our endless wants for materialistic things and worldly pleasures? These desires and wants are never fully satisfied. Once we get something we desire, our attention goes to something else we desire or want. It is an endless cycle that can never be satisfied-Thus our cause for suffering. The second cause for suffering is ignorance of the true nature of reality and things, this ignorance results in vices like anger, hate, greed, envy, etc.*

***The Third Noble Truth**: Is the end of suffering. Which is twofold also-The end of suffering on earth usually occurs with death of the physical body. Whereas End of suffering in the spiritual life comes about through the path of enlightenment (state of nirvana)-which enables one to reach a liberated state from suffering and from continuous rebirths. This comes about by overcoming our lower nature, and vices.*

***The Fourth Noble Truth**: Is a set of instructions to the attainment of the end of suffering through the Noble Eightfold Path. The instructions are divided into 3 groups:*

i. Good Moral Conduct, which includes right view, right speech, and right intention/thought.
ii. Mental Development & Meditation includes right action, right effort, and right livelihood.
iii. Wisdom and Intuition includes Right Samadhi and Right Mindfulness.

Tibetan Buddhism Enlightenment & Mysticism

Tibetan Buddhism is derived from Chinese Buddhism and tantric teachings. It follows the same path as Buddhism. They also put great emphasis on karma which means that the action of every individual has an effect or consequence. An action will put a chain of events into motion. Some actions can have an effect or consequence take place right away, while others take time in setting the effect in motion. It could be years or lifetimes later. Good action will bring good results and vice versa. This is an essential component to the path of enlightenment as it releases one from being too attached to worldly pleasures and gains.

The Tibetan use Mandalas, meditation, and mantras along with mental exercises to reach enlightenment. Mandalas are a visual guide and pillars of knowledge on the Path to Enlightenment. The website www.tibetantravel.org/tibetan-buddhism/beliefs-in-tibetan-buddhism.html, explains that, " Mandalas are spiritual and ritual symbols which represent the entire cosmos. Mandalas are generally made by skilled, trained monks and they use colored sand to create Mandalas." Mandalas represent different things, such as birth, death, rebirth, enlightenment, and impermanence.

Meditation is done through devotional payers, visualization, and mental exercises. The website www.tibettravel.org/tibetan-buddhism/beliefs-in-tibetan-buddhism.html, explains two types of meditation that the Tibetans participate in "The first category of meditation is Analytical Meditation. This includes techniques mentioned in texts such as Lam Rim (Gradual path to enlightenment), applying logic to examine parts of the identity, consciousness, mind, etc. The second category, which is more popular is called concentrative meditation. This involves techniques such as repeating a mantra, or concentrating on the breath or a flame, etc. In concentrative meditation, the point is to still the mind and direct focus towards one thing only. Most Tibetan meditation techniques use a combination of both analytical and concentration methods. Popular meditation techniques are Dzogchen, Mahamudra, and chanting.

The website What is Dzogchen Meditation - A Beginner's Guide! | (improveyourbrainpower.org), define "Dzogchen" as a Tibetan word that means "The Great Perfection". "Dzogchen meditation is simply a practice that aims at helping the meditator realize this great perfection in themselves that is pure, limitless and endless which brings bliss, peace and harmony. It is believed that all human beings have a perfect nature within themselves that is full of wisdom, insight, unlimited awareness, and compassion. It can perceive, experience, relate and reflect all other areas of our lives including the joys and sufferings of life. Lama Surya Das, a Dzogchen meditation expert who was among the people who introduced this practice to the western world stresses this concept of the practice by comparing it to enlightenment. And he says," Enlightenment is not becoming divine. Instead, it is about becoming more fully human. It is the end of ignorance."

Practicing Dzogchen meditation implies that you are perfect with your faults and living in your perfect nature. Once you are in perfect nature it remains perfect. The same website further says that "There are times it may be overshadowed by our negative feelings, thoughts and actions but it can never be permanently replaced. It is there to stay. Dzogchen meditation is a path through which we go deep within the self where this nature lies, get to access it, and establish it in our lives. The practice gives us the opportunity to rest in this nature. It is known to be easy to do compared to other forms of meditation as you do not have to put much effort into doing this meditation. It is mostly about observing the constant movement of our thoughts, feelings and sensations, noticing

the patterns that form without interrupting them since they rise on their own and disappear on their own too. Dzogchen meditation breaks the habits which we have taken up through the years that have kept us chained in our weaker self and the rising and falling emotions that are always affecting how we think, perceive, and respond to various situations. To summarize the practice, Lama Surya Das says, "Breath by breath, let go of fear, expectation, anger, regret, cravings, frustration and fatigue. Let go of the need for approval. Let go of old judgments and opinions. Die to all that and fly free. Soar in the freedom of desire lessness.""

One needs to apply these teachings properly into their lives and gradually work toward training the mind to release negative thoughts, beliefs, and values, as these bring us down. The website www.improveyourbrainpower.org/what-is-dzogchen-meditation says that, "...the teachings say that we all have to train our mind so as to sieve off the filth and impurities in our minds that wear us down. With an untrained mind, we are more likely to be carried away by afflictions of the mind such as passions, desire, anger, depression, anxiety, insecurity, jealousy, fear, and sadness. These afflictions and emotions that rise within us every day, which make us take certain actions that we later regret is only temporary not permanent.

But since we get so caught up in them, we tend to believe they are part of our nature, which is not the case. As mentioned earlier, all of us have a nature that is pure of all negative emotions, well-balanced and that is filled with wisdom, skillful means, and enlightenment. This nature, which is our true nature, is complete in wisdom and compassion and is one with the universe. And to get to this nature, we must do Dzogchen meditation which comes with several steps that lead us there, the right way. When we can follow the steps provided in this practice as we meditate, we go beyond the mental afflictions and the temporary wave of feelings and eventually get to this powerful, immovable, and insightful nature. Achieving this is gaining The Great Perfection and having The Great Completion, where you are enlightened, wise, humble, quiet (both on the inside and the outside) and possess natural goodness. In his book "Awakening the Buddha Within, Tibetan Wisdom for The Western World", Lama Surya Das says, "Let go. Let be. See through everything and be free, complete, luminous, at home. At ease.""

Mahamudra

Mahamudra is also known as the Great Hand Posture is a Sanskrit word, which means the great seal. It is a simple meditation of contemplation, which starts by attaining peace. Gradually the meditation concentrates on three energetic seals, which are engaged in this meditation to open the energy channels in our body by directing the vital breath/energy in the right direction.

Mahamudra is a set of teachings that lead to self-realization and self-liberation. It is a set of sacred teachings that reveal the true nature of reality as emptiness, space. It is meditation practices focus on attaining peaceful states of mind, to further experience the true nature of mind, of non-duality and the attaining of enlightenment.

The practice of Mahamudra was founded by a Wandering Mahasiddha (Prophet) in the 8th Century by the name of Saraha. His teachings are founded in poems and songs of self-realization. They pointed to parables of the emptiness of non-duality, nature of mind, meditation, rituals, tantric

practices and of non-action. The website Saraha - Wikipedia states that,
"Saraha, Sarahapa, Sarahapāda, or in the Tibetan language The Arrow Shooter, (circa 8th century CE) was known as the first sahajiya and one of the Mahasiddhas. The name Saraha means "the one who has shot the arrow.". According to one, scholar, "This is an explicit reference to an incident in many versions of his biography when he studied with a dakini disguised as a low-caste arrow smith. Metaphorically, it refers to one who has shot the arrow of non-duality into the heart of duality." Saraha is one of the founders of Buddhist Vajrayana, and particularly of the Mahamudra tradition."

The same website describes Saraha as for being a wandering yogi and Tibetan Buddhist engaging in behaviors that overturned the social norms of caste, social class, and the oppressive normative gender roles and hierarchies of the time. He used hand gestures and pointing out instructions, which is the use of hand mudras to awaken the initiate to walk the path of liberation.

"Mahamudra means absolute seal, totality, unchangeable. Sealing something implies that you cannot destroy it. Mahamudra was not created or invented by anybody; Therefore, it cannot be destroyed. It is absolute reality." Thubten Yeshe

"The discussion of how to attain Mahamudra entails methods for meditating on Mind itself as something having voidness as its nature." Aryadeva

The website www.en.wikipedia.org/saraha, describes a poem on the nature of mind by Saraha,

"*English translation: Some think it's*
in the realm of space,
others connect it
with emptiness:
mostly, they dwell
in contradiction.

Here is one scholarly interpretation of the above verses:

"Space: In Indian thought, especially Buddhist, a common metaphor for the objective nature of reality as empty or unlimited, and the subjective quality of the mind that experiences that emptiness...Space also is one of the five elements recognized in most Indian cosmologies, along with earth, water, fire, and air. In certain contexts, "sky" is a more appropriate translation for the Apabhramsa or Tibetan original. emptiness: According to most Mahayana Buddhist schools, emptiness is the ultimate nature of all entities and concepts in the cosmos, realization of which is required for attaining liberation. Emptiness (Skt. sunyata) may be regarded negatively as the absence, anywhere, of anything resembling a permanent, independent substance or nature...more positively, it is regarded as the mind's natural luminosity, which is "empty" of the defilements that temporarily obscure...The critical remarks directed here at those who think "it" (i.e., reality) is connected with emptiness presumably are meant to correct a one-sided obsession with negation, which is one of Saraha's major targets."

The purpose of the poem is to ensure that the seeker, does not get stuck in conflict with the metaphors. This was why Saraha's teachings as depicted in Tibetan iconography are with an arrow. The arrow of awakening the soul to the true nature of everything. Not to get stuck (too attached to

things), realize the impermanence of this world, and free yourself gradually from the materialistic and move towards the higher path of liberation to 'The State of Nirvana.' This is the purpose of his teachings to free humans from their lower natures and bring them to self-realization, through the gradual awakening of the sleeping soul.

Taoism Enlightenment & Mysticism

Tao means "The Way", and Taoism is the way of life for the Chinese people. The Tao is the doctrine for attaining Perfection of Character and becoming one with the Tao. The aspirants work towards freeing oneself from selfish desires and materialistic gains while pursuing the Taoist Three Jewels, which are compassion, moderation, and humility, which in turn play an important role in balancing your life-force energy and spirit. Along with that they work in the harmony of yin and yang with the five elements that make up reality and creation, which is the process of re-creating itself.

The Tao Te Ching is the sacred text of the Taoists, which is the doctrine of the nature of the Tao and how to be one with it. The Tao Te Ching is written by Lao Tzu and is a sacred text to perfect our lower qualities into higher ones and to live in balance with the universe. Other sacred texts include the Zhuangzi and I Ching which are used to perfect the yin and yang energies and live-in balance with world and its elements. The Yin and Yang symbol is called the Taijitu and is considered an important symbol on the path to enlightenment. This symbol represents cosmology. The website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taoism, explains that "In this cosmology, the universe creates itself out of a primary chaos of material energy, organized into the cycles of yin and yang and formed into objects and lives. Yin is the receptive and Yang is the active principle, seen in all forms of change and difference such as the annual season cycles, the landscape, sexual coupling, the formation of both men and women characters and sociopolitical history."

Further to the discussion, a common, cyclical theme of Taoism is aligning oneself with the forces of the cosmos. And this goal is found in all their rituals, meditations, spiritual exercises. On the path of alignment with the cosmic forces one experiences higher states of psychic phenomena such as visions, agelessness, higher intellect, improved health, divination etc. An enlightened being is called Xian.

"When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be." Lao Tzu

"When you are content to be simply yourself and don't compare or compete, everyone will respect you." Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

"Because one believes in oneself, one doesn't try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one does not need others' approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her." Lao Tzu

"At the center of your being, you have the answer. You know who you are, and you know what you want." Lao Tzu

"Stop thinking and end your problems." Lao Tzu

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists. Of a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, "We did this ourselves." Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching

Japanese Enlightenment & Mysticism

The Japanese follow the path of enlightenment through asceticism, and a search for the spiritual soul. Yamabushi are one mystical group of isolated individuals. They are a mystical group of hermits, isolated individuals that live on a mountain. They live a simple life with harmonious relationship with nature. They have been endowed with supernatural powers and occult wisdom. They follow a Buddhist way of living-The Buddhists tenants of the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths. Through isolation, meditation and deep contemplation of oneself, nature and by the study of the sacred texts, along with martial arts teachings they become enlightened beings.

The Egyptian Enlightenment & Mysticism

The Egyptians follow the path of Enlightenment and Mysticism through their everyday rituals, meditation, and mental exercises.

"Meditation: the way to freedom from anxiety, depression, slothfulness, insanity, unrest and ignorance." Sebai Muata Ashby

The most important aspect of Egyptian Enlightenment and Mysticism is the development of the soul. The Egyptian consider the earthly existence a small part of an eternal journey. By perfecting our soul one could live in paradise in an eternal state by the union with the Universal Energy, Heka. The life-force, universal energy was called the Keha (magic), it was the invisible force that animates everything in creation. In humans, this magical energy was known as the soul. The website https://www.ancient.eu/article/1023/the-soul-in-ancient-egypt/, states that,

"At the beginning of time, the god Atum stood on the primordial mound during the waters of chaos and created the world. The power which enabled this act was heka (magic) personified in the god Heka, the invisible force behind the gods. The earth and everything in it were therefore imbued with magic, and this naturally included human beings. Humanity had been created by the gods, and one lived and moved owing to the magical force which animated them: The soul. An individual's life on earth was considered only one part of an eternal journey. The personality was created now of one's birth, but the soul was an immortal entity inhabiting a mortal vessel. When that vessel failed and the person's body died, the soul went on to another plane of existence where, if it were justified by the gods, it would live forever in a paradise which was a mirror image of one's earthly existence. This soul was not only one's character, however, but a composite being of different entities, each of which had its own role to play in the journey of life and afterlife. The mortuary rituals which were such an important aspect of Egyptian Culture were so carefully observed because each aspect of the soul had to be addressed for the person to continue their way to eternity."

To become one with the Heka magic of the universe, one had to perfect each aspect of the soul. In Ancient Egyptians Texts, the soul has nine aspects to it, that culminated into a whole

individual. The website https://www.ancient.eu/article/1023/the-soul-in-ancient-egypt/, states that, "The soul was thought to consist of nine separate parts which were integrated into a whole individual, but had very distinct aspects. Egyptologist Rosalie David explains:" The Egyptians believed that the human personality had many facets-a concept that was developed early in the Old Kingdom. In life, the person was a complete entity, but if he had led a virtuous life, he could also have access to a multiplicity of forms that could be used in the next world.""

The 9 aspects of the soul are as follows:

1. *Khat-Is the physical body that provided a connection between the soul and the earthly life. The website www.ancient.eu/article/1023/the-soul-in-ancient-egypt/, says that, "The soul would need to be nourished after death just as it had to be while on earth, and so food and drink offerings were brought to the tomb..."The corpse was not actually eating these nourishment, rather they were taken in by the invisible soul.*

2. *Ka-is the subtle, etheric, astral form of the physical body, that was considered the look-alike double of the physical body. The website https://www.ancient.eu/article/1023/the-soul-in-ancient-egypt/, explains that, "The Ka was created at the moment of one's personality but also a guide and protector, instilled with the divine spark of Heka. It is the Ka aspect of the soul that absorbs the food offerings, as sustenance in the afterlife. In the Egyptian consciousness all livings beings had ka, including plants, animals, inanimate object to animate beings.*

3. *Ba-Is the soul aspect that was symbolized by a bird which could travel the heavens and across the earth. Ba was linked to a specific body.*

4. *Shuyet-Is the person's shadow self which is the shadow of the soul. This aspect of the soul represented comfort, guidance, and protection.*

5. *Akh-Is the transformed self. In the website https://www.ancient.eu/article/1023/the-soul-in-ancient-egypt/, this is explained as, "The Akh, was the immortal, transformed self which was a magical union of the ba and ka. Strudwick writes, "once the akh had been created by this union, it survived as an 'enlightened spirit,' enduring and unchanging for eternity." Akh is usually translated as 'spirit' and was the higher form of the soul. Spell 474 of the Pyramid Texts states, "The Akh belongs to heaven, the corpse to earth, "and it was the Akh which would enjoy eternity among the stars with the gods. The Akh could return to earth, however, and it was an aspect of the Akh which would come back as a ghost to haunt the living if some wrong had been done or would return in dreams to help someone they cared for."*

6. *Sahu-Is a part of the transformed aspect of the soul, called Akh. This is the part that looks like a ghost, which appears in one's dreams or reality.*

7. *Sechim-The life-force energy, Chi of the individual, which is also a part of the Akh. The Sechem part of the soul is earned when one masters oneself.*

8. *Ab-This aspect of the soul is the heart center, from which a person's character of good and will emanate. The same website explains this aspect of the soul was the spiritual heart which arose from the physical heart, which was left in the mummified body. The spiritual heart is a place where the record of all their thoughts, deeds, and individual expressions were kept during their time on earth. "It was Ab which was weighed in the balances against the white feather of truth by Osiris and it (the heart) if found heavier than the feather, it was dropped to the floor where it was devoured by the monster Amut. Once the heart was eaten, the soul ceased to exist. If the heart were found lighter than the feather, the soul was justified and could proceed on towards paradise. A special amulet was included in the mummification of the corpse and placed over the heart from bearing witness against the soul and possibly condemning it falsely."*

9. *Ren-At birth, the gods gave each soul (individual) a secret name. Only the higher gods knew of this name. The website https://www.ancient.eu/article/1023/the-soul-in-ancient-egypt/, "Scholar Nicholaus B. Pumphrey writes, "The only way that the fate or destiny can change is if a creature of higher power changes the name. As long as the name of the being exists, the being will exist throughout eternity as part of the fabric of the divine order." The Ren was the name by which the gods knew the individual soul and how one would be called in the afterlife."*

The Akh was the transformed, enlightened soul of the individual. Once Osiris and judged worthy of eternal existence justified all nine aspects of the soul, then they were set free in the form of Nirvana, Enlightenment.

Judaism Enlightenment & Mysticism

Judaism follows the path of enlightenment through Hasidim Ashkenazi, Kabbalah and the Merkabah/Merkavah.

***Hasidim Ashkenazi**: is a mystical Jewish path that focuses on prayers. An individual can rise spiritually towards God through devotional prayers and its knowledge.*

***Kabbalah:** The Kabbalah path of enlightenment is a set of spiritual teachings that explain the relationship between the unchanging, the Infinite (Ein Sof), mysterious God and its Creation. These mystical teachings were given to the righteous people of the Jews. The knowledge was considered for only a few select that would understand it-It was a mysterious, esoteric knowledge. The divine light flows down from God into the Divine Creation via the Ten Sefirot. The website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kabbalah, states that, " Kabbalah describes man as the inner dimension of all spiritual and physical realms (with angels the outer aspect), from the verse "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness…And God created man in His own image, in the image of God. He created him; male and female He created them…Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 1:26-27, 2.7). Kabbala is a mystical doctrine that is based on ten creative forces called Sefirot's.*

Sefira means emanation/attribute and through these 10 Sefirot's, God the Infinite (Ein Sof), and The Endless, creates the physical world and other spiritual worlds. God continuously creates these worlds. The 10 Sefirot's are as follows.

1. *Keter: Is the emanation The Divine Crown, which is radiating 620 pillars of light. It is the primordial ether, the place where all thoughts are absorbed into the light.*

2. *Binah: Is the attribute of Understanding and Discernment. There are 50 gates of understanding. Binah is the higher feminine aspect of the Godhead and is symbolized as the mother of the Shekinah. Binah conceived with Hokmah (the 3rd emanation) to give birth to the lower seven sefirot's-It is likened to a river branching out into seven streams.*

3. *Hokhmah: Is the emanation Wisdom. It portrays 32 ways of wisdom. Hokhmah is the contemplation aspect of God's thoughts. This sefira is the primordial point of creation from which all knowable reality originates.*

4. *Din: Is the attribute of Judgment, Power, and Might-and is the representation of fearsome power of divine punishment and wrath in the world. This power balanced the universe, the destructive forces is needed to maintain order and give out punishment. Drawback it also contains the seeds of demonic evil (the other side), and the serpent.*

5. *Hesed: Is the attribute of Love, Compassion, Loving, Kindness, Greatness, Grace. There are 72 bridges of Hesed, which symbolizes the benevolent, generous aspect of God.*

6. *Hod: Is the emanation of Majesty and associated with the power of prophecy. Hod symbolizes the channel through which God's judgment comes down.*

7. *Nezah: Is the attribute of Eternity, Victory, Endurance, and symbolizes active grace in the world.*

8. *Yesod: Is the attribute of Foundation and is symbolized by the male genitals and is the channel through which Tiferet (the 9th Sefira) strives to unite within the Divine Presence the Shekhinah and thus pass on the creative and benevolent divine forces.*

9. *Tiferet: Is the emanation of Glory and Beauty which represents the ideal balance of Justice and Mercy needed for proper running of the universe. This sefira unites all the other nine powers.*

10. *Shekhinah: This emanation is God's Presence, dwelling and immanence in the world. It also means Kingdom, and the divine feminine as the recipient of higher forces. It is through the Shekinah that humans can experience the Divine Union with God.*

The Sefirot's are associated with various levels of creation and are revelations of the God's will.

The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kabbalah, says that, "Kabbalah describes Man as the inner dimension of all Spiritual and Physical Realms (with angels the outer aspect), from the verses

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them... Then the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7). Kabbalists equated the final Sephirah Malkuth (Kingdom) with the indwelling Feminine Divine immanent Presence of God throughout Creation, adapting for it the previous Rabbinic term Shekinah (Divine Presence), but lending the concept new hypostatic and sexual interpretation (Earlier Biblical Wisdom literature describes Wisdom as a feminine manifestation of God). The fallen, exiled state of Creation by man exiles the Shekinah into captivity among the Keli pot forces of impurity, awaiting redemption Above by man Below. Nachman of Breslov saw this archetype in fairy tales of the world, but in disordered narrative. His Kabbalistic tales rearrange the symbols to free the Divine Queen for reunion with The Holy One Blessed Be He."

Everything in the world is connected to the Creator through the 10 creative forces, and by knowing and understanding the divine or the notion of God that is found with the created world. One can transcend the created world and attain union with God-the Divine, Transcendent Absolute reality.

Merkabah/Merkavah Mysticism: Is a set of teachings based on visions of ascents to heavenly places and the Throne of God. The Merkabah is associated with Ezekiel's visions from the Hebrew Bible. Merkabah mean 'chariot'. The website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merkabah-mysticism says that "In English the Hebrew term Merkabah/Merkavah relates to the Throne-Chariot of God in prophetic visions. It is most strongly associated with the vision of Ezekiel chapter 1 of the four-wheeled vehicle driven by four hayyot ("living creatures"), each of which has four wings and the four faces of a man, lion, ox(cherub) and eagle (or vulture)." This teaches of making a journey to God-Union with God. The Jewish people believe in having faith in one God and observing the rules and practices laid out in the Torah and Zohar.

The process of enlightenment can be understood through mystical tradition of Judaism. There are three types of mysticism in the history of Judaism: the ecstatic, the contemplative, and the esoteric. Although they are different, they often overlap in practice. The first mystic tradition is characterized by the quest for God-or more precisely, for access to a supernatural realm, which is itself infinitely remote from the inaccessible Deity-by means of ecstatic experiences. The second type is rooted in metaphysical meditation, which always bears the imprint of the cultural surroundings of the respective thinkers, who are exposed to influences from outside Judaism. Jewish thinkers of the Middle Ages drew their inspiration from Greco-Arabic Neoplatonism and occasionally from Muslim mysticism. The third type of mysticism claims an esoteric knowledge (hereafter called esoterism) that explores the divine life itself and its relationship to the extra-divine level of being (i.e., the super-consciousness). From this perspective, the extra-divine is a symbol of the divine; It is a reality that reveals a reality superior to itself. This form of mysticism, akin to gnosis (the secret knowledge claimed by Gnosticism, a Hellenistic religious and philosophical movement) but purged-or purged-of the dualism that characterizes the latter, is what is commonly known as Kabbala. Here the seeker is said to experience ecstatic experiences to magical manipulations.

In a nutshell, Judaism followed a spiritual path to enlightenment-union with the divine by having faith in one God and leading an ascetic spiritual discipline that led to detachment from everything but God. Thus, spirituality was strongly influenced by the liturgies and by the scriptures

such as the use of the Psalms for prayer, and individual prayers often recalled historical events just as much as they recalled their own immediate needs. For deep contemplation and meditative practices of special importance the following aspects of the kabbalah were considered: Binah (understanding) and Chokhmah (wisdom), which come from years of reading, praying, and meditating the scriptures. Further the Shekinah, the presence of God was honored in their daily lives, the nurturing, feminine aspect of God.

The Torah was viewed as the central expression of God's will and therefore given a holy place for its study. As time moved, consciousness evolved, new insights entered the world and the Christian mysticism, entered the Jewish realms. The Shekinah became a mystery, Da'at became gnosis, and poverty became an important component of monasticism.

Christian Enlightenment & Mysticism

In Christianity enlightenment is known as salvation, revelation, illumination, and mysticism. There are three major phases of enlightenment in Christianity.

1. *By the denial of physical desires and prayer the soul is integrated into the Divine. This is done through following Jesus's teachings and example of sacrifice of the self. The website www.britannica.com/topic/christianity/stages-of-christian, says that, "Following Christ involves a dying to self, a giving up of oneself wholly to God, so that one may be possessed by divine love. Such detachment and purgation were frequently expressed in extreme terms that imply the renunciation of all human ties. Paradoxically, those who insist upon the most absolute detachment also emphasize that purifying the self is more a matter of internal attitude than of flight from the world and the external penance. In the words of William Law:" The one true way of dying to self wants no calls, monasteries or pilgrimages. It is the way of patience, humility and resignation to God." (The Spirit of Love, Part 1)."*

2. *The second phase of enlightenment is ecstatic contact with God. Being in the Presence of God, as he become a part of our inner self and acts. You get into a state of gnosis-having spiritual knowledge based on direct participation with the divine. This can be attained through deep meditation, prayers, or contemplative states.*

3. *Transformation of the Soul is the third phase of the enlightenment process. As we proceed on the path of enlightenment, we begin to transform our inner self towards the divine. As a result, our outer self begins to change to divine qualities and self-fulfilled wisdom. In this phase the soul enters the divine light and wisdom that transcends the earthly realm. The website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/christian_mysticism, says that, "Teresa of Avila, who used the metaphors of watering a garden and walking through the rooms of a castle to explain how meditation leads to union God and John of the Cross, who used a wide range of biblical and spiritual influences both to rewrite the traditional "three ways" of mysticism after the manner of bridal mysticism and to present the two "dark nights": the dark night of the senses and the dark night of the soul, during which the individual renounces everything that might become an obstacle between the soul and God and then experiences the pain of feeling separated from*

God, unable to carry on normal spiritual exercises, as it encounters the enormous gap between its human nature and God's divine wisdom and light and (the soul) moves up the 10-step ladder of ascent towards God."

There are many practices that lead to enlightenment in Christianity. Some of which are meditating on the Lord's Prayer, following special rituals and rites such as the Eucharist, Baptism, the Devotional Prayers all hold symbolic values on the path of enlightenment.

The Eucharist

The Eucharist is a sacramental union which was given to his follower on the Last Supper-that is the body and blood of Jesus (Isa) are symbolized as the bread and wine in the Holy Communion. This divine food is given to the initiate as a symbol for strengthening their faith, and with the promise that their sins can be forgiven, and the lower self can be perfected through the partaking of his body which is his ministry and his teachings and through his blood which is his bloodline. The presence of Christ is related to his body and blood, which metaphorically represents his teachings, faith, and bloodline. The is the spiritual food for the souls of his believers. Thus, the spiritual food is symbolized in the bread and wine of the Last Supper as he leaves his legacy of teachings, and his unwavering faith and presence to them. Eat and drink are metaphors to follow his teachings and blood (The Holy Grail-the holder of his bloodline, wife and children-and they will never lose their way, or their faith.)

"The Lord's Supper was the instituted sign and seal; and he who in faith drinks of the cup, having reference to its signification, that blood of Christ which confirms to true believers the whole covenant of grace, is assured thereby of its faithfulness and permanence, and derives to himself the fulness of its blessings." Richard Watson, An Exposition of the Gospels of St. Matthew, and St. Mark

The Baptism

Is a traditional Christian rite as an ordinance – that is to demonstrate an adherent's faith to God and Jesus (Isa). It is a ceremony that uses pure water to purify one's soul, so they are born anew in their new faith. Baptism is a spiritual ceremony that is associated with initiation into a new insight, faith or even a higher consciousness. At this time, the initiate is born anew with a new understanding – thus given a new name.

Most Christians use the basic trinitary formula for baptism ceremonies. That is "In the name of the Father, and the son, and the Holy Spirit." They do this while sprinkling or immersing in water. The website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism the baptismal process,

"The practice of baptism emerged from Jewish ritualistic practices during the Second Temple Period, out of which figures such as John the Baptist emerged. For example, various texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) corpus at Qumran describe ritual practices involving washing, bathing, sprinkling, and immersing. One example of such a text is a DSS known as the Rule of the Community, which says "And by the compliance of his soul with all the laws of God his flesh is cleansed by being sprinkled with cleansing waters and being made holy with the waters of repentance." John the Baptist, who is considered a forerunner to Christianity, used baptism as the central sacrament of his messianic movement.

The website further elaborates the practice of baptism via Aspersion, which is sprinkling water on the head, and Affusion which is pouring water over the head. In Psalm 51:7, "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow."

Baptism is a form of anointing and signifies the pouring of the Holy Spirit unto the newly born or newly believing individual. The Baptizer performs Aspersion or Affusion three times to confirm the baptism. The same website explains that "Baptism is considered to be a form of rebirth - "By water and the Spirit"- the nakedness of baptism (the second birth) paralleled the condition of one's original birth. For example, St. John Chrysostom calls the baptism, i.e., giving birth, and "new way of creation…from water and Spirit."

Devotional Prayers

Devotional Prayers are prayers that are prayers that are performed in private daily. They are often done to thank God, or ask forgiveness, request, or receive God's favor, blessings, and guidance throughout the day. Devotional Prayers are meant to be resolute, devoted, or loyal to God and his chosen messenger. Prayer is talking to God to create a loving, loyal relationship with him.

"Prayer should not be regarded as a duty which must be performed, but rather as a privilege to be enjoyed." E. M. Bounds

To create a long-lasting devotional prayer life, one would start by creating a sacred holy place in some corner of their home. Set a time and place, that is establish when and where you will pray. Then obtain a prayer list such as one that follows:

https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/catholic-prayers

Catholic Prayers

Prayers for those who practice the faith of the Roman Catholic Church.

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be
thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our
daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us
not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary,
Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit

of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of our death.

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In His name. My God have mercy.

Prayer is a gift from God, so that we can find mercy and have the privilege to know and love God. That is to find God within and walk with him.

In a nutshell, the main purpose of enlightenment is self-development and transformation of the lower self to the higher self, and if one desires to go further towards the Union with God. Enlightenment has many stages and dimensions and can be done in whatever way one choses. The website www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transfiguration_of_Jesus, states that, "The transfiguration is one of the miracles of Jesus in the Gospels. This miracle is unique among others that appear in the canonical gospels, in that the miracle happens to Jesus himself. Thomas Aquinas considered the transfiguration "the greatest miracle" in that it complemented baptism and showed the perfection of life in Heaven. The transfiguration is one of the five major milestones in the gospel narrative of the life of Jesus, the others being baptism, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. In 2002, Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries in the Rosary which includes the transfiguration."

Greek Enlightenment & Mysticism

The Greeks teaching and philosophers have influenced many religions and cultures of the world. They achieve enlightenment by initiation into the study of divine mysteries, for exp., The Eleusinian Mysteries which was influenced by the religious practices of the Mycenean period. The purpose of the mysteries was to elevate the status of humanity above the earthly form into the heavenly realms of the divine. Much of the true knowledge of the Eleusinian Mysteries remain a secret till this day. They are only given to a few initiates of the mysteries. The concluding purpose of the mysteries was to lead us back to the principles from which we descended, that is a perfect state of joy and bliss of intellectual and spiritual good.

Many of these themes were portrayed in their myths. One such story is found on the website www.ancienteu/persephone, that explains the myth of Hades, Persephone, and Demeter. "According to mythology, Hades, God of the Underworld, fell in love with beautiful Persephone when he saw her picking flowers one day in a meadow. The god then carried her off in his chariot to live with him in the dark underworld. In some accounts, Zeus had given his consent to the abduction, the location of the crime being traditionally placed in either Sicily (famed for its fertility) or Asia. Meanwhile, Demeter searched the earth for her lost daughter and though Helios (or Hermes) told her of her daughter's fate, she, nevertheless, continued her wanderings until she finally arrived at Eleusis. It was here, disguised as an old woman, that the goddess cared for Demophon (or Triptolemos, who would later give the gift of grain to humanity and teach farming), the only son of Metaneira, the wife Keleos, King of Eleusis. To reward the family for their kindness. Demeter set about making Demophen immortal by placing him on a fire every night. However, when Metaneira saw this, she raised an alarm. In response, Demeter revealed her identity and demanded a temple be built in her honor. This was the beginning of the celebrated sanctuary of Eleusis. Once the temple was completed, Demeter withdrew from the world and lived inside it; at the same time, she created a great drought to convince the other gods to release Persephone from Hades. As the drought claimed evermore victims, Zeus finally sent Hermes to persuade Hades to release his ill-gotten bride. Before giving her up though, the wily Hades put a pomegranate kernel in the girl's mouth, knowing its divine taste would compel her to return to him. In other versions of the myth, Persephone could have been released if she had not eaten anything in the underworld during her captivity, but at the last moment, Hades gave her a pomegranate seed. Finally, as a compromise, it was decided that Persephone would be released but that she would have to return to Hades for one-third of the year (or in other accounts one-half)."

The story signifies important aspects of enlightenment such as:

- *Descent of the soul (loss of freedom, loss of divinity, loss of our higher self, loss of our light)*
- *The Search for redemption, to search for knowledge and our lost light, our lost higher self, the search for our lost divinity. (Back to the Rivers of Belief, Enigma)*
- *Ascent of the soul is the result of our search for our lost divinity. We climb the staircase gradually towards our higher self-towards God-Consciousness, or Union with the divine self once again, but with an expansion of consciousness of the lessons learn through our descent and search-This is a rebirth to a higher self.*

- *The Eleusinian Mysteries also symbolizes the changing of season-the impermanence of things and of reality itself. Everything moves in cycles and changes.*
- *Much is not known about the sacred rituals and practices of the Eleusinian Mysteries; some scholars have found that the initiates fasted and performed mental exercises and meditations along with other spiritual rituals which have led to profound spiritual experiences.*
- *Other forms of mysticism and enlightenment concepts included shamanic types of mystical experiences where the Shaman enters a dream reality through the process of visualizations. The Shamanic influence on Greek Mysticism can be found in Dionysus and Orphism (the religious cult of Orpheus). The website www.eocto.org/articule/103, says that, "The ancient Greek encounter with Shamanism and its transformation into Greek mysticism is described by W.K.C. Guthrie in his, 'Orpheus and Greek Religion: where he shows how Shamanic motifs of the detachment of soul, soul-travel, ecstasy, dismemberment, and resurrection were taken over by the cult of Dionysus, and then modified and refined by the mysteries religious movement known as "Orphism," named after its mythical founder, the poet Orpheus."*
-
- ***Zoroastrianism Enlightenment***
- *Enlightenment is likened to the kindling of the inner light. This is why many rituals honor fire that gives light as the sign of God in their sacred places. This inner light is a symbol for a sacred divine presence within. Just like the halo seen on the heads of Prophets, and holy men and women. The Prophet Zarathustra focuses on union with God through the learning of the mysteries of the self and universe. That is through the intellect. The website www.pyracantha.com/z/mysticz4.html, says that,*
- *"...Zarathustra sees in his union with God. His visions are not just "feelings" or outpourings of love. They are learning; they have intellectual content. Therefore, Zarathustra says, in the a forementioned Yasna 31.3:" It is a matter of principle for the discerning, O Wise One, for our knowledge..." Zarathustra's mysticism is one of learning and thinking, which for some temperaments at least, does not in any way preclude love or even passion."*
- *Zoroastrianism focuses on intellectual mysticism and enlightenment. The Place of divine love is second to Divine Intellect. They focus more on a good mind and intellect. The website www.pyracantha.com/z/mysticz4.html, says that "In contrast to the love and passion-themes of Sufism, Zarathustra never uses an erotic metaphor to describe his loving relationship with God in the Gathas. Marriage occurs in the wedding Gatha, Yasna 53, but it is between earthly people, not between God and human being. The eros which so permeates Sufi mystical poetry is not found in higher levels of reality. Rather, it is a kind of dignified, restrained, even strait-laced type of love-relationship that Zarathustra is describing, neither the duration lover of the Sufis nor the enthusiastic bride of Biblical Song of Songs, re-interpreted by generations of Christian mystics as the soul in relation to God. There are some of the mystical references in the Gathas that stand out, for me, as evidence that a trust stands out, for me, as evidence that a true mystical path exists which is central to the Zoroastrian experience. I believe that a Zoroastrian mystic can, with the grace and help of the Wise Lord, travel the same path of vision and friendship with God than Zarathustra did so long ago."*

In the Zoroastrian religion the spiritual and material are not two separate realities rather they are considered one whole world, where everything material such as the stars, moon, sun, sky, mountains light, darkness, wind, earth, clouds all are symbols to the spiritual part of reality. The divine presence is found through the material world in everything as everything is connected to one divine reality, accepting this world view along with prayers that lead to enlightenment. Divine love is present with the calming presence of the divine intellect. On the website www.pyracantha.com/z/mysticz4.html,the author talks about the symbolism of Amesha Spentas, the seven attributes of God. Each one was a guardian spirit of one sector of creation to watch over. "Thus, Creation is divided between the seven: Spenta Mainyu, the creative energy of God that cares for human beings, ASHA, Righteousness, presides over fire, Vohu Manah, Good Mind, over animals, Kshathra, God's Power, protects metals and minerals, and in some theories, the sky and air as well; Spenta Armaiti, Devotion and Serenity, cares for the earth and the Land. Haurvatat and Amertat, wholeness and Immortality, watch over waters and plants."

Further on the same website the author asks a Zoroastrian Priest, Ervad Noshir Karanjia, what the Amesha Spenta's looked like, 'were there any images of them, icons such as the holy pictures which fill Eastern Christian Churches and are so much a part of a Byzantine worship? This conversation took place at an outdoor Zoroastrian gathering in summertime. He said, "The image of an Amesha Spenta is in what it represents." Pointing to the trees and grass, he said that these were the image of Haurvatat. The earth, he said, was the image of Spenta Armaiti; the fire, that of ASHA. To a devoted and aware Zoroastrian, the whole created world, not just human beings, as in the Jewish/Christian tradition-is in the image of God."

The path of enlightenment for the Zoroastrians is to live in peace and harmony with the whole created world, and this they do by putting into practice the performing of sacred rituals and contemplation of the objects of the natural world. The website www.pyracantha.com/z/mysticz4.html, explains that the Zoroastrian path of enlightenment establishes an ascending scale for the contemplation of the Created World. Such a contemplation would start with a physical entity (for instance, fire), rising to the yazata Atar-The Spirit of Fire, an intermediate spiritual being, worthy of veneration: to the entity of an "archangel" or Amesha Spenta, to the abstract concepts of Justice, Truth, and Cosmic Order, and finally, to the prophetic mystical experiences of Zarathushtra, as he "sees" God with his awakened eye and self and channels the light of revelation within him. Here is, in this state of being, is the place where all levels of perception exist, from the believers who worship the fire or the divinity, Atar, "to the more abstract minds who meditate on Amesha Spentas, to the Philosophical types who find spiritual satisfaction in pure and imageless concepts." Along with that there is room for the seeker, and the mystical one who can see beyond the ordinary and see God in all these dimensions, "from the flame of the fire to the living emanation of the Wise Lord."

Islamic Enlightenment & Mysticism

There are various paths of Enlightenment and Mysticism found in the Islamic religion. One is through Meditation. Prophet Muhammad is said to have practiced meditation by going into seclusion for hours. He used to go to Mount Hira for Meditation. The website

www.techofheart.co/2007/10/prophet-muhammads-meditation.html states in the article 'Prophet Muhammad's Meditation', that,

"It is known from historical accounts that before his prophetic illumination. The last Divine Messenger, Prophet Muhammad used to go to spiritual seclusions and extended retreats into Mount Hira near Mecca. It is during one of such meditation retreats (in the holy month of Ramadan) in a defining moment of extra-cosmic enlightenment. Divine revelations started to reveal to him. The well-preserved collection of such Divine revelations later came to be known as the Quran, which means recitation because of the Prophet following the inspirations, used to recite it to others including his companions."

The deep meditations of Prophet Muhammad led him to become one with God, Divine Consciousness and thus revelations from the divine were revealed. Prophet Muhammad's life is taken as a spiritual journey for those who desire the higher path to enlightenment. Muhammad is known to have also traveled from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to the highest heaven to complete a journey of enlightenment. This mystical journey is known as Miraj. The website ***https://jsr.shanti.virginia.edu/back-issues/vol-10-no-1-august-2011-people-and-places/sacred-land-in-the-quran-and-hadith-and-its-symbolic-and-eschatological-significance/*** *says that,*

"*Mecca represents the center of the Islamic spiritual universe and the place of unfailing divine protection, it is also situated by Islamic tradition and the Qur'an itself in a kind of polar or complementary relationship with another sacred city in Islamic geography, the city of Jerusalem. According to hadith traditions recorded in Qur'anic commentary and elsewhere, Jerusalem was the second sacred city created by God, and it was created forty years after Mecca. The connection between the two cities in Islamic consciousness was established and indelibly sealed by the Islamic account of Muhammad's Night Journey (or Miraj), in which Muhammad is taken from the sanctuary in Mecca "horizontally" to Jerusalem and then "vertically" (traditionally from the site where the Holy of Holies of the ancient Jewish Temple once stood) through the seven heavens to within "two bows' lengths" of God, himself. While even the earliest Qur'anic commentaries, and Muhammad's own companions, disagreed about the nature of this journey (was it really physical, or only a spiritual/mental journey?), its importance in the Islamic understanding of the Prophetic mission and its relationship to Judaism and Christianity cannot be overstated."*

The website goes on to relate that the city of Jerusalem has always remained a sacred site in Islamic consciousness as the point of mystical ascent (as it certainly does in Christianity as well). In Islamic mysticism, Jerusalem, or more properly, the "celestial Jerusalem," is often a symbolic element in mystical allegories and visions and is an important aspect of spiritual enlightenment. Celestial Jerusalem is considered by some an axis mundus, a central point, a place that is sacred above all. The website https://www.academia.edu/8727362/World_Navels, "Jerusalem is the world navel for three religions."

Another important spiritual practice of Islam is found in Sufism. Sufism is an aspect of Islam that focuses on spiritual enlightenment, through the process of divine love, opening of the heart center, by the development of the lower self towards the higher self.

The web site https://www.realizedbygrace.org/post/7-major-stages-of-spiritual-awakening-according-to-sufism, says that,

"Spiritual awakening knows no limitations of caste, creed or religion. Any person in the world can experience the pleasure of union with the supreme power and attaining moksha (which is the last stage of spiritual awakening). However, many believe that the spiritual awakening experiences are restricted to certain religions and spiritual traditions, like Hinduism and Buddhism for example. This is certainly not the truth. Sufism, an esoteric path within Islam, also follows a variety of spiritual practices, leading to the awakening experiences. It showcases us the way to God through spirituality and emotions. The ancient practices and mystical teachings imparted by the Sufis have great level of importance for the spiritual seekers today. Not just this, Sufism also describes the major stages spiritual awakening that explains the spiritual journey of the soul traveling from this world to a world that is closer to God. But, before discussing these stages of spiritual awakening, let us have a look at a story by Farid al-Din Attar (12th Century Sufi poet), who first described these stages. The story goes like this - Once upon a time, there were thousands of birds who were eager to find a King for their Kingdom. Keeping a great level of determination in their mind, they set out for the journey. On their way, they found seven valleys, each having a different name and significance. When they began crossing the valleys, some birds died, some gave up, some returned to their kingdom, and some made excuses. So, only 30 birds made through the journey. At the end of the journey, they realized that the king they were looking for, reflects themselves. Eventually, they become fully aware of the fact that all of them are the part of a whole. This story, 'Colloquy of the Birds' is based on a belief that God is the totality of existence. He resides in us, and we reside in him. Hence, God is not separate from the universe, and we are not separate from God. The seven valleys, as described in this story poem are Talab, Eshq, Marifat, Istighnah, Tawheed, Hayrat and, finally, Fuqur and Fana. These valleys are actually the stages or path of awakening experienced by the soul."

The same website goes on to explain that "…. the first 3 stages (or valleys) are the preparatory phases for the seekers. These stages are all about karmic purification and letting go of mental baggage. In a sense, these stages are like springboards - ready to lift the seeker to the higher consciousness level."

The 7 Stages of Spiritual Awakening are explained in the same website which are found below.

*"1. **The Valley of Search:** This is the first step in the journey of a spiritual seeker. One must not follow the path followed by his/her forefathers, and instead should cleanse his/her heart before embarking on this spiritual journey. Patience and ardor are the major keys to traverse this valley.*

*2. **The Valley of Love:** This stage symbolizes reason and love by smoke and fire. It states that where there is love, there is no room for reason; it simply vanishes. When a person gains inner sight, he/she can see the spiritual foundation of the visible world. The seeker knows that he won't be able to learn the importance of love if he/she keeps seeing the world with the eyes of 'reasons. Hence, the seeker completely dissolves reasons in the fire of love. At this stage, the seeker is completely enamored with the love and admiration for God.*

3. ***The Valley of Knowledge:*** *This stage refers to seeker's thirst for spiritual knowledge or the knowledge which has no starting or end points. Here, the seeker is not looking for bookish knowledge. The seeker is not looking for more facts and information about God. Then what type of knowledge is he/she looking for? He/she is looking for insight and for true understanding of the reality. The seeker knows that bookish knowledge cannot be an alternative to true understanding. Merely parroting scriptures will not take him/her closer to God. The seeker is looking for wisdom, not mere information. Thus, the seeker tries to find wisdom in every area of his/her life. He/she tries to find wisdom in his/her pain and suffering and to find wisdom in his/her happy moments too. The seeker gains wisdom when he/she faces the obstacles of his/her life. Even though he/she sometimes struggle to feel gratitude for God, especially if they are going through hardships, the seeker is still able to see the "silver lining" behind the cloud of suffering. In short, the seekers' everyday life becomes his/her training ground for wisdom.*

4. ***The Valley of Unity:*** *Here the unity between mind and heart develops and a certain kind of consciousness takes form. At this stage, the seeker has no ego and praises the Lord for all the creations in the world. His/her interest in life increases and the seeker enjoys everything he/she sees. He/she begins to see his beloved in everything, even in his/her enemy. Hence, the world becomes a place of splendor for the seeker.*

*5***. *The Valley of Contentment:*** *At this stage, the seeker comes across a feeling of contentment, that is, he/she becomes inwardly happy. He/she has also developed a certain indifference to all material things. The seeker understands that happiness cannot be obtained by material things. This stage is of an advanced indifferent attitude and the joy and happiness derived from the previous stage or valley.*

6. ***The Valley of Wonderment:*** *This stage is also known as the Valley of Amazement, wherein the seeker is amazed by the beauty of God. He/she keeps exploring the mysteries of God's revelation and continues to be astonished as he/she explores the mystery of creation one after the other. The seeker gets to know the cause of all causes, the reason of all reasons and understanding about what is beyond all things.*

Because of these inner understandings, the spiritual seeker often becomes an ardent devotee of God. The realization of this valley is like that of the fourth valley, where the seeker continues to explore God in his/her creation. But, in the fourth valley (valley of unity), the seeker seeks God in his/her creation so that he/she could end his seeking. In his/her seeking, God remains an objection or goal to reach or grasp onto. However, in the valley of wonderment, the seeker seeks God not because he/she wants to end his/her spiritual search or not because he/she wants to be God-realized. The seeker seeks God because he/she loves him. He/she loves God for the sake of it and has no hidden motive behind his/her love, like going to heaven for example.

7. ***The Valley of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness:*** *This is the last stage referred to as the state of self-annihilation in God. Here, the seeker is completely empty of all concepts of a separate self that constitute the ego-mind. His/her individuality is lost in the depth of God conscientiousness, just like a water drop gets lost in water of a vast sea. Here, in this stage, there is no lover, only the beloved remains. Here, the worshipper gets lost, only the worshipped remains. Here, there is no God's creation, only God remains. This stage is aptly described by the mystic Kabir through his poem:"*

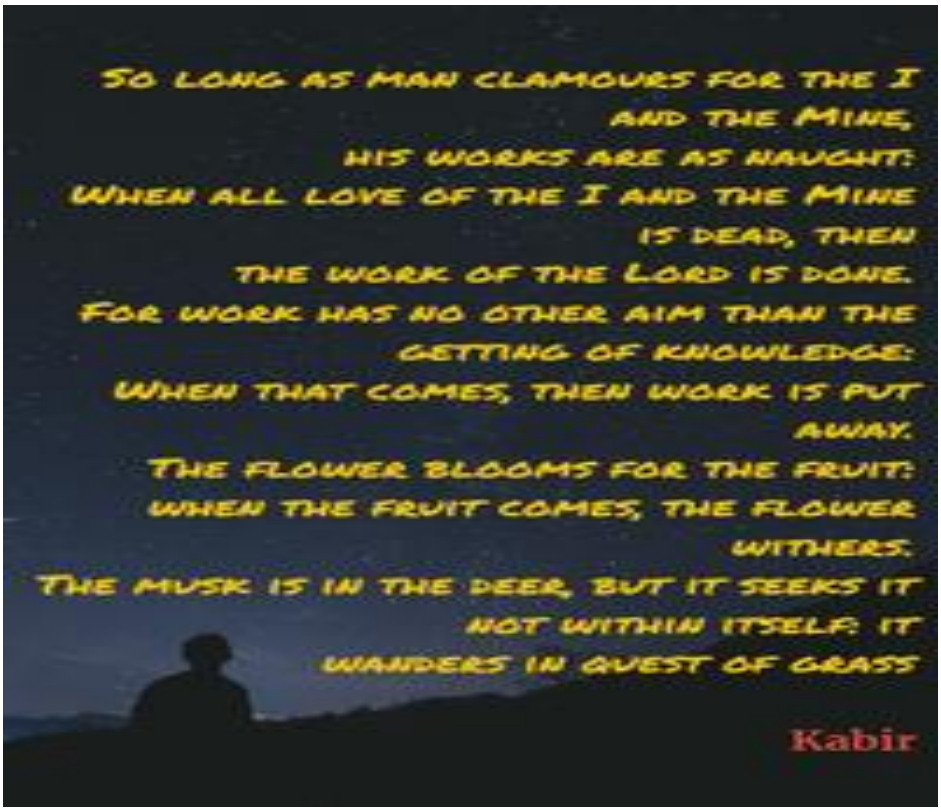
So long as man clamours for the I
and the Mine,
his works are as naught:
When all love of the I and the Mine
is dead, then
the work of the Lord is done.
For work has no other aim than the
getting of knowledge:
When that comes, then work is put
away.
The flower blooms for the fruit:
when the fruit comes, the flower
withers.
The musk is in the deer, but it seeks it
not within itself: it
wanders in quest of grass
Kabir

Image taken from https://www.realizedbygrace.org/post/7-major-stages-of-spiritual-awakening-according-to-sufism.

Further the same website https://www.realizedbygrace.org/post/7-major-stages-of-spiritual-awakening-according-to-sufism, goes on to describe the seventh valley as the final and ultimate stage of spirituality where only final death is remaining. Here the same website says that "...all notions of the self and other, including that of God or the Divine, are let go of, dropped, dissolved, jettisoned, abandoned, discarded, transcended, seen through, lost and forgotten." "Though the notion of discrete self was dissolved, the very subtle aspects of the mind, which include the cosmic mind, the mind of creation, maintenance and destruction, the mind of time and space, these various forms and shades and grades of the mind had to some extent remained intact and undetected. They are residuals of the mind. They are echoes of the "other." Each of the stages or valleys are one of the seven heavens. Through these valleys or heavens, we begin our journey into our souls, realizing the fact that it is the divine which lies at the center of our soul. "

Other ways to union with God or Islamic Enlightenment, is through the teachings and payers of The Prophet Muhammad and the Twelve Imams. The website https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ali-Muslim-caliph/Shiism-Sufism-and-the-chivalric-orders,

says that

"Nearly every Sufi order traces its lineage to Muhammad through Ali, Sufis, whether Sunni or Shi'i, believe that Ali inherited from the Prophet the spiritual power (wilayah or wilayah) that makes the inner journey to God possible. Numerous references are also to be found to him in later Sufi

works. For example, such hidden or occult sciences as jafr, the science of the symbolic significance of the letters of the Arabic alphabet, are said to have been established by Ali."

Further in the same website this point is affirmed," In later Islamic philosophy, especially in the teachings of Mulla Sadra (c. 1571–1640) and his followers, Ali's sayings and sermons were increasingly regarded as central sources of metaphysical knowledge, or "divine philosophy." Members of Sadra's school, which still survives, regard Ali as the supreme metaphysician of Islam and believe that he was the first person to have used Arabic terms to express philosophical ideas. For centuries, Muslim philosophers considered Ali's sayings—such as "I have never seen a thing except to have seen God before it" and "If the veils were to be removed from the mysteries of the world, it would not add to my certitude"—to be proof of his supreme metaphysical understanding." Ali was a divine source of knowledge and the father of Sufism. He brought forth the esoteric side of Islam.

The Islamic divine state of enlightenment can be reached through many ways. Through these mystical paths various higher states of consciousness can be reached. By following the teachings of the Prophet, which is a laid-out path of enlightenment, by the gradual ascending of the ladder of the 12 Imams, one can reach divine union with God.

Other Enlightenment & Mysticism Traditions

Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism practice union of the soul with the all-pervading principle, God, Brahman, and the Krishna (Christ consciousness). In the African cultures, ecstatic trances dominate the mysticism with some shamanic rituals that guide the soul towards perfection. Their path to enlightenment is following the divine spirits guidance.

The Native American Enlightenment & Mysticism

The Native Americans have many paths to the mystical and divine. Rosemary Ellen Guiley says in her book "Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience," that, "Mystical communion with the sacred varies from group to group, even sub-group to sub-group, and includes dance, song and chant, the sacred pipe, purifying sweats (a preliminary for sacred undertakings), fasts, and dreams, vision quests, and occasional use of psychotropic drugs. As in other cultures, the Native American experience of the mystical takes place within a framework of language, traditions, concepts, rituals, and interactions developed over thousands of years, and which reside in the racial collective unconscious."

In Native American mysticism their enlightenment experiences are through visions and dreams, which are considered real experiences taking place in parallel realities. These states can be induced by fasting, hallucinogenic drugs, drumming, smoking the pipe, and chanting. These parallel realities are known as different worlds. The website Native American Mysticism 1 (dwildepress.net), explains the four main worlds as follows;

1. *Ike Papakahi-Objective World: The material world where everything is separate and known through scientific understanding.*

2. *Ike Papalua-Subjective World: Everything is connected. Emotional Knowing-The Qualia Experience.*

3. *Ike Papakolu-Symbolic World: Everything is symbolic-Dream knowing.*

4. *Ike Papaba-Holistic World: Everything is one. Unity, identity. (In a way, it is no longer known, cf. Plotinus)*

The Shaman is usually the person that traverses these worlds. The same website describes this journey to other worlds. The shaman uses chanting and drumming to alter consciousness to interact with another order of reality. The author goes on to explain that "In visions and dreams, the shaman may encounter beings, as for instance Sufis do. For Native Americans, the beings are often said to be animals. The Penobscot shaman, for example, was called a m'teoulin, a word which derives from a word meaning drumming; the shaman frequently had a baohi'gan, or familiar animal spirit or guide who helped him. One thing to notice about this interaction is that the animals inhabit other orders of reality just as humans do, and at that level powerful symbolic communication is possible between the adept and the animal. We might interpret this as a kind of unification - animals and people come together in communication at this level."

The Native Americans believe this type of connection comes about through the universal energy called the power. This power or energy pervades all reality-that consciousness in its varying degrees is present in all the universe. The power is known by Wakanda, Orenda, and Manitou. Through this power the learned Shamans can interact with the four worlds. Their belief that everything is connected in the universe allows them to live with everything in a harmonious way. Their rituals, prayer and traditions are designed to create harmonious relationships with everything in the universe. The website www.dwildepress.net/critica/native1.html, says that, " The power pervades the natural and other worlds, but it manifests itself in anything, a rock, a pipe, a tree, an animal, an article of clothing, a person. A person with a certain kind of power can become an adept at healing, which means having interactions with beings in different worlds. This is where the idea of shamanism enters. The Shaman can dream of symbolic acts or objects that will carry power to heal, or find game, or bring rain, for example." In this way the Shaman is always a part of everything in the universe and this knowing flows into everything they do. This is another facet of enlightenment.

The Universal Way to Enlightenment and Mysticism

The thread of ancient wisdom is found in all the religions and cultures of the world. All the religions and teachings of the world are pieces to the big puzzle-The Ancient Wisdom. All threads lead to the One God. In Ancient Wisdom the main components of Enlightenment are as follows:

1. *Mindfulness: To maintain awareness of reality.*
2. *Investigation: To discover or know the true nature of reality.*
3. *Energy/Action: Your determination, effort*
4. *Joy or rapture*
5. *Relaxation/Tranquility of mind, body, and soul.*

6. *Concentration/Focus: A calm, one-pointed state of mind or clear awareness.*
7. *Equanimity: To accept reality as it is without lower desires, without craving or aversion.*

On the path of spiritual enlightenment, one faces many obstacles and hindrances that need to be overcome. The following are some hindrances that need to transform to their higher counterparts:

- *Lust, sensual pleasures, procrastination/sloth, gluttony, greed, wrath/anger/hate/doubts, jealousy/ill-will, pride. To overcome these obstacles, we need to fill our lives with love, compassion, kindness, and forgiveness. The following are some simple ways to transform the lower aspects of one's personality to their higher counterparts. Some might come easily, while others may take some time and diligence to overcome. Take your time and strive every day to become better than you are, with the spirit of 'do no harm' and 'do right' to yourself.*
- *Chastity and self-control cures lust by controlling passion and leveraging that energy for the good of others. When you choose love over lust then you have overcome your lust.*
- *To overcome procrastination/sloth, which is defined as extreme laziness, it is recommended to not leave things undone, make every effort to complete them. Practice being diligent, persistent in what you do and create a list of ethics and make the effort to complete what you started.*
- *Gluttony can be overcome by temperance, abstinence, by service to humanity, by keeping yourself busy with a goal or purpose-Fill your inner emptiness with a purpose, a goal.*
- *Greed can be overcome by acts of charity, sacrifice, generosity, and benevolence.*
- *Wrath/anger/hate/doubts can be overcome by the act of patience, forgiveness, and mercy. Also, by letting go of past mistakes, making amends, and meditation and prayers. Give peace to yourself.*
- *Envy/jealousy/ill-will towards others can be overcome through acts of kindness, fulfilling your inner desires which creates inner satisfaction, being grateful, loving yourself and promoting self-esteem instead of them-esteem and showing gratefulness.*
- *Pride can be overcome through humbleness, humility, acts of bravery. By filling yourself with positive attributes and characteristics, then you can begin to overcome your lower self.*

Psychological Enlightenment,

In the psychological sense five phases of enlightenment have been identified. Evelyn Underhill describes these five stages as psychological development along the path of enlightenment. She says the path itself is characterized by states of intense pleasure and intense pain. Rosemary Ellen Guiley describes in her book "Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience," the five stages as follows:

1. *The Awakening of the Self to consciousness of Divine Reality. Typically, this is a well-defined, often sudden experience and is characterized by great joy.*

2. *Purgation and /or Mortification, attempts to rid himself or herself of imperfections and material desires, which are obstacles to unity.*

3. *Illumination. A happy state of apprehension of the Divine Presence, experienced in contemplation and meditation. It is not true union. Many mystics never get beyond illumination. Artists and highly creative people tend to have illumination experiences.*

4. *The Purification of the Self. Also called the "Dark Night of The Soul." The Mystic attempts to surrender the self, personal identity, and will to the Divine, and is plunged into a painful and unhappy state of the absence of the Divine Presence.*

5. *Union with the One. The mystic achieves permanent and transcendent levels of reality.*

6. *In Eastern Enlightenment and Mysticism, a higher stage is when reabsorption of the individual soul into the Infinite takes place. The Sufis, to consider such annihilation the only true attainment of God."*

Another important aspect to note is in these various stages of enlightenment, one can experience psychic, intuitive, and divination phenomena. Rosemary Ellen Guiley says in the "Encyclopedia of Mystical & Paranormal Experience, "that, "...phenomena such as visions, voices, oracular, dreams, paranormal powers (clairvoyance, telepathy, psychokinesis, bilocation, levitation and so on), raptures, trances, and hyper-emotionalism."

Enlightenment means to awaken from ignorance, to know and understand yourself and the universe around you and thus create a Pure Inner Reality for yourself. If we purify our minds, we purify our experiences of the world and thereby attain an inner pure land/self, free from all suffering, disease, old age. They will never be reborn in a world of cyclic change unless they choose to help humanity. The website [What Are The Outer And Inner Pure Dakini Lands? - Chinese Buddhist Encyclopedia (chinabuddhismencyclopedia.com)] says that the world appears to our mind as faulty, imperfect, and unsatisfactory because our mind is impure, polluted by the delusions and their imprints. Pure inner lands can be attained only by purifying the mind. An example of a pure land is Shangri-la, Shambhala, Kingdom of God, Land of Khizara (Jazira Khizra), Land of Dakini, they are all examples of both inner and outer lands of perfection.

Everything in the world, our reality is seeped, in duality even the heavens and hells. When we still have desires, wants, that need to be fulfilled, it is still the world of duality. Only true union with God, Fanaa (Self Annihilation can set you free from your own self.)

One of the main purposes of practicing meditation is to overcome ordinary appearances and conceptions. Because of these ordinary perceptions and consequences, we experience an endless cycle of ordinary death, ordinary intermediate state, and ordinary rebirth. This endless cycle known as Samsara, the Material, must be broken. Then we can create an inner and outer pure land.

Conclusion

To attain enlightenment, one would gradually perfect the self-image coming from our inner self. That is becoming aware of the higher qualities of love, compassion, self-respect, humility, humbleness, self-responsibility, giving to others, respect for free-will, etc. By making these qualities more active in oneself, one gradually eliminates the lower qualities of jealousy, selfishness, hate, harming others, deceiving etc.

As Metaphysician, we deal with clients on varying levels of consciousness. It would be our job to show them how to change and integrate personality defects by changing the way they think and behave by self-acceptance, which is accepting themselves unconditionally and seeking to fulfill their expectations. Their self-esteem is internally based and not based on what others think of them. You receive personal validation from within, not from external sources. Also, taking self-responsibility for their actions and choices. To think for themselves and respect other's rights and their right to practice freewill.

These are elements of a self-fulfilled person, which is what enlightenment is all about. When we are fulfilled and complete within ourselves, we do not require outside validation. We view everything through the lens of our inner validations, with critical thinking and human reasoning, thus we can create a better world.

Enlightenment is the transformation of the internal self through changing the inner processes of self-awareness, self-discovery, self-understanding, self-love, self-transformation, and self- mastery. As an enlightened being, you can think for yourself responsibly, by taking responsibility for all your actions and choices past, present, and future.

In this Program, a metaphysical direction opens new horizons with an abundance of tools and concepts to enhance the quality of one's life and consciousness. Critical thinking enhances and empowers an individual's quality of life and relationships. It opens new ways of thinking and dealing with problems. With these tools at your disposal, you can reassess your old belief systems, and make the necessary adjustments, and changes to your current situation. You have become enlightened. Become a master of metaphysics with these elements.

This becomes evident in the way you exist, you have learned to deal with problems in a scientific, rational manner, to evaluate open-mindedly, and logically, and analyze all possibilities, to come to a sound conclusion. You are using your knowledge to better your life and the lives of the people around you. In short, by reinventing yourself, you have redefined who you are, and why you are who you are. No longer do you rely on external validation and what others think of you. You do not have "them-esteem" anymore, you have replaced it with true "self-esteem." You have taken your power back to be able to live a successful life.

The different tools, concepts, and approaches you have learned have enabled you to transform your vibrational energy signature to move to a more healthy, positive energy signature. Now you will be able to surround yourself with people and relationships who share the same values,

and ideals, as like attracts like. You are Perfect and strive to be perfect every day. Furthermore, by applying the concepts of this manual you begin to live a Healthy Life, you work to create a better version of yourself and a more enlightened future. By becoming self-fulfilled, you become enlightened, you develop strong, positive, empowering habits that raise the consciousness of humanity to a higher degree. You have learned to set personal and professional boundaries, and seek healthy, interdependent relationships, based on mutual trust and effective communication. You respect yourself and have respect for others for who they are, not what they believe in. You also seek your approval and do not rely on approval or validation from others. As an enlightened, self-fulfilled person, and you have learned to be assertive, which means you can express yourself in an appropriate and win-win way, without demeaning another person. By striving to continue to grow, and evolve through life-long learning, you will contribute your share in improving the human condition.

These life skills enhance the human condition, to a higher living standard, and empower the human spirit to do wonderful things. Education raises awareness and the quality of life, reduces poverty and crime, elevates self-esteem, gives higher-paying jobs, creates new employment opportunities, etc. All things that lead to a peaceful and civil society. Concisely, this information improves the quality and essence of life and existence using practical and theoretical concepts.

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Interpersonal & Social Skills by Saiyra Akbar

Human Skills Human skills are essential in today's world and the workplace where we spend most of our day. One of the most common human skills is adaptability. Being able to adapt to any situation will allow us to cope better with co-workers, family, and friends. This is especially true in workplaces where working with others might be a challenging task. Being flexible and adaptable will create a peaceful and productive work environment. It will also enable one to have a good relationship with co-workers and create a successful company culture. Another important human skill is having people skills, which allows one to interact with others in a compassionate and cooperative manner.

Being able to create good relationships with coworkers, family and friends is necessary for day-to-day interaction. This would include characteristics like empathy, respect, and cooperation. Another important human skill is communication. There are many types of communications that we participate in during our daily interaction with others. This we will talk about in the next section. Suffice it to say that having communication skills will create a dynamic professional and personal environment.

Thus, learning all these skills is another vital aspect of human skills. Keeping yourself open to learning and new ideas will create a better quality of living and being. Social Skills An important part of Social Skills is communication skills which is understood to be the art or technique of persuasion using oral and written language. To understand the basics of communication skills, one needs to understand that communication is one of those words that are most hyped in contemporary culture. It includes many experiences, actions, and events; Also, a variety of happening and meanings, as well as technologies.

It is a known fact that poor social and communication skills will put a strain on many relationships. Lack of communication is the primary reason for most mistakes, frustrations, and failures. It is no secret that those who have excellent communication and people skills tend to be more successful. Therefore, study these concepts thoroughly until these concepts have been mastered. Verbal and Non-Verbal Social Skills Verbal communication uses words to share information with others. These words may be both spoken and written.

When developing verbal communication skills, it is essential to use a strong, confident speaking voice. Use professional, powerful words to communicate your feelings, and what you are trying to convey. Especially when presenting information to a group of people, be sure to use eloquent, professional words and language, along with a strong voice so that everyone can easily hear you. Be confident when speaking so that your ideas are clear and easy for others to understand. Avoid using word filler such as "um," "like," "so," or "yeah." While it might feel natural after completing a sentence or pausing to collect your thoughts. It can also be distracting for your audience. Try presenting your presentation, speech to a friend or colleague before presenting it to an audience. Another important component of developing verbal skills is focusing on active listening skills (as discussed above).

Being present in the moment and intently listening to and hearing others. Active listening skills are essential when conducting a meeting, presentation, or even when participating in a one-on-one conversation. Developing effective non-verbal social skills is by improving the use of your body language, gestures, and facial expressions that convey information to others. Non-verbal communication is usually spontaneous, and it can be used both intentionally and unintentionally. For example, you might smile unintentionally when you hear a pleasing or enjoyable idea or piece of information. Non-verbal communication is helpful when trying to understand others' thoughts and feelings. If they are displaying body language, such as crossed arms or hunched shoulders, they might be feeling anxious, angry, or nervous.

If they are displaying body language with both feet on the floor and arms by their side or on the table, they are feeling positive and open to information. Other examples include nodding their heads vigorously when saying "Yes" to emphasize agreeing with the other person. Or a shrug of the shoulders, a vague expression when saying "I'm fine", may imply that things are not fine at all. Your facial expression, your tone of voice, and your body language can often tell people exactly how you feel, even if you have hardly said a word.

To develop non-verbal communication skills, it is important to become aware of your body language, gestures, and facial expressions when speaking with someone. Once you know where your weakness lies you can improve it to make it your strength. Some of the benefits of effective communication skills may include giving and collecting of information, building contacts, clients and maintain good relationships with them, effectively expressing personal needs and understand the needs of others, make sound decisions, and solve problems, anticipate, and predict behavior, and resolve conflict.

Our daily life requires interaction with other people in different social settings. To be successful in your work and have meaningful professional and personal relations one needs to have effective communication skills. Verbal communication is composed of four basic elements, which are words, voice, tone, and body language. These four elements have varying influences on the overall message that an individual is trying to convey. Some messages can be more influenced by words, some more by voice tone, and others by body language. Let us discuss each element and its importance.

Words: Word choice is usually essential to the overall message. Certain words can hurt and leave deep wounds and lasting scars, while other words can bring joy, love, and show compassion. It is best to avoid stinging words, instead experts recommend it to use word softeners such as:

1. *I am curious... (keeping it open and light)*
2. *Let us suppose... (Let us play here)*
3. *Help me out here... (You will be doing me a favor) Let me ask you this... (Asking their permission more forcefully)."*

Voice Tone: We all use voice tones as part of our language. Watch your tone; Do not speak down to others.

Body Language: Body Language is another important aspect of communication. Body language of a person sends a particular message that is read by others either consciously or unconsciously, which is why we sometimes get a certain "vibe" from people. To avoid sending the wrong message with body language, it is best to keep the following in mind:

- *Smile as appropriate and use proper facial expressions.*
- *Look people in the eye when speaking to them.*
- *Nod your head occasionally as you listen to people and, if sitting, lean into the conversation Do not invade another's personal space.*
- *Refrain from pointing fingers when you are speaking to or are upset with others.*

It is vitally important that your words, voice, tone, and body language are conforming, meaning in harmony with each other. You do not want to send mixed signals such as folding your arms while trying to have an open discussion, or short nervous giggles inserted between serious words, this implies a lack of confidence.

Paying conscious attention to your own words, voice tone, and body language will help you to discover any areas in need of improvement, which will, in turn, help you to send the right message.

"The greatest compliment that was ever paid to me was when someone asked me what I thought and attended to my answer." Henry David Thorea

Listening Skills

Another important aspect of effective Social Skills is that we also have good listening skills. This implies that both parties have equal time, which means, one person speaks, and the other person listens, then, they exchange roles. However, if one person dominates the conversation, it stifles the other person. If the foregoing describes you, then now is the time to listen and pay close attention! Take a deep breath and absorb this section on effective listening skills. Poor listening skills are responsible for misunderstandings, creating problems, mistakes, and confusion among people. Leaders understand this and are, therefore, excellent listeners. If we talk and cut in during a conversation, when we should be listening, people will find it frustrating and annoying to talk to us because they never get much of an opportunity to express themselves fully.

If this describes you, then release the need to talk too much; release the need to dominate conversations. Each person in a general conversation should speak and listen equally. Pay attention to your next conversation with someone and check to see if you tend to dominate the conversation and if so, try to listen with enthusiasm as much you can.

"The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them." Ralph Nichols

There are several barriers to listening effectively. Some barriers to effective listening include tumult noise and mental noise. Tumult noises are loud noises, sounds that distract or prevent you from hearing and concentrating on a conversation. Mental noise is inner noises that distract you from effectively communicating such as:

- Interrupting, talking over the person

Distracting thoughts or preoccupation

Disinterest

Prejudice

There are some things you can do to overcome these barriers. There must exist a harmonious balance when speaking and listening. Some tips for effective listening are as follows:

- *Do not discuss anything when emotions are running high.*
- *Do not get distracted/preoccupied, keep your focus on the conversation.*
- *Do not interrupt letting the person finish his or her thoughts.*
- *Do not think about what you are going to say next while the other person is speaking.*
- *Do not finish sentences for others. Show interest in the other person.*
- *Do not prejudge what another person is trying to say.*

Respect the other person for his or her knowledge and skills, irrespective of the person's background. Make conscious efforts to take charge of your thoughts. Consciously avoid taking on an "I know what he or she is going to say" attitude while the other person is speaking.

Avoid Distractions: Face the person who is speaking. Maintain eye contact while the other person is speaking. Ensure that you are comfortable. Switch off your cell phone.

Misunderstanding: The inability to hear correctly is one of the many reasons for misunderstanding. What a speaker is trying to communicate with should be clear and understandable. If not, then you can ask them politely to explain or repeat what they are trying to convey. You may think that it is impolite to ask the speaker to clarify his words or intentions, but that is not the case at all. Most people will appreciate the fact that you are trying to understand what they are trying to say. (Exp. Just to make sure I heard correctly you said..., or just to clarify you said...).

Interrupting a conversation with improper body language or inappropriate words will harm effective communication. Here are some tips to help you avoid this barrier to effective listening: Listen without interrupting while the other person is speaking. If you seek to clarify something, use appropriate body language such as raising your hand or ask politely for more details (like "I am sorry to interrupt you...").

Faking Attention The person who is faking attention is just "hearing" but not "listening." There may be some eye contact, and the person may even be nodding, but the mind is elsewhere. The person may be thinking about what to have for lunch or what to wear for the party that evening. Faking attention is a habit for some people, but it conveys a lack of respect. Avoid this by staying focused on the conversation.

Try these tips: Make it a habit to listen attentively. It is advisable to assume that the other person knows something that you may not know. Avoid thinking about how to reply when the other person is speaking.... Other common barriers to effective communication include highly charged emotions. A listener may not be functioning at their optimum level when he or she is angry or sad. It

is better to avoid conversations when you are angry or sad. Keeping calm will give you mental strength to face any situation. Taking a deep breath helps in overcoming anger and fear. Great leaders, coaches, and managers are good listeners.

Effective listening is a valuable skill that helps team members to achieve their goals efficiently and improve productivity. This skill is necessary to stay competitive in the professional job market and build a meaningful business relationship. Implementing the above-mentioned tips in your daily life will also help in improving and maintaining personal relationships with spouses, family, and friends. It is possible with self-examination and self-discipline one can achieve effective listening skills-Thus, effective communication skills.

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Assertive Communication

Another important aspect of communicating effectively is assertiveness. Assertiveness is the quality of being self-assured and confident without being aggressive. Assertive people are advanced and enlightened simply because they continually work on themselves. They have a win-win attitude. Their motto is "I won't walk on you, but I won't allow you to walk on me either." Assertive communication is characterized by a confident declaration or a viable statement without need of proof.

Further, assertiveness gives validity and affirms the person's rights or point of view without being aggressive or threatening the rights of another. The website https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/assertive/art 20044644 states that, "Being assertive is a core communication skill. Assertiveness can help you express yourself effectively and stand up for your point of view, while also respecting the rights and beliefs of others.

Being assertive can also help boost your self-esteem and earn others' respect. This can help with stress management, especially if you tend to take on too many responsibilities because you have a hard time saying no. Some people is naturally assertive. But if you are not one of them, you can learn to be more assertive." Assertiveness is considered an essential life skill and recommended for adults and children alike. While not currently taught in schools, assertiveness is a communication skill that can be taught, and skills mastered effectively.

Assertiveness is a method of advanced thinking where an individual speaks up in defense of their views. Assertive people are outspoken, and analyze information, details, and evidence and come to a sound, logical conclusion. Assertiveness supports creative thinking and effective communication. In a nutshell, assertive communication is the ability to express positive and negative ideas, along with varying emotions in an open, honest, and direct way. It recognizes our rights while still respecting the rights of others. It allows us to take responsibility for ourselves and our actions without judging or blaming other people. It also allows us to work towards a mutually satisfying solution where conflict exists.

Assertiveness is expressing your thoughts, feelings, and opinions in a way that makes your views clearly understood by others, without putting down their thoughts, feelings, or opinions. It can be hard to do, but it gets easier with practice. In assertive communication, both individuals are equally important. Being assertive means having dignity and self-respect, being able to say no when justified without feeling guilty, expressing your feelings, being able to change your mind, negotiating and reaching compromises when conflict exists, being able to make mistakes.

Some Barriers to Assertiveness include the fear of repercussions of acting assertively or may lack the skills to express themselves effectively. They may believe that they do not have the right to be assertive. Communicating assertively will not guarantee the other person will change his or her behavior and give you what you want, but it will help you establish limits and boundaries with others. Assertive people respect boundaries-both their own as well as others'. They treat others fairly, empathetically, and directly, and will not cross another's boundaries, but will not allow others to cross their boundaries either. Assertive people will never demean you or put you down. If they

have an issue to discuss, they do so promptly and kindly. At times, they may be direct and firm, but kind. The following are some essential beliefs of assertive people:

- *I have rights and so do you.*
- *I respect myself and I respect you too.*
- *I am good enough and so are you.*
- *I am valuable and worthy and so are you.*
- *Conflicts are opportunities to gain experience.*
- *I will not take advantage of you, but I will not allow you to take advantage of me either.*

The benefits of being assertive are many, which are as follows:

- *Healthy, Interdependent relationships,*
- *Enhanced communication skills,*
- *Enhanced self-concept and self-esteem*
- *Enhanced self-confidence*
- *Enhanced leadership*
- *Employee trust*
- *More career growth options*
- *Higher Income*
- *Less Stress*
    a. *Assertive people send out vibes that reflect a confident, stable, personable, and rational demeanor. Their assertiveness empowers them to oversee most situations appropriately and responsibly. This also helps them have better relationships with others. There are six main characteristics of assertiveness skills in communication. These are:*
        i. *Eye Contact: Demonstrates interest and shows sincerity.*
        ii. *Body Posture: Congruent (agreeing) body language will improve the significance of the message.*
        iii. *Gestures: Appropriate gestures help to add emphasis.*
        iv. *Voice: A level, modulated tone is more convincing and acceptable and is not intimidating.*
        v. *Timing: Use your judgment to maximize receptivity and impact.*
        vi. *Content: How, where, and when you choose to comment is more important than WHAT you say.*

In Assertive communication it is Important to include "I" Statements, as it confirms and affirms your attention. Being assertive involves the ability to appropriately express your needs and feelings. This you can accomplish by using "I" statements. These indicate ownership, do not attribute blame, focus on behavior, identify the effect of behavior, is direct and honest, and contribute to the growth of your relationship with each other. Strong "I" Statements Have Three Specific Elements: Behavior, Feeling, Tangible effect (consequence to you) For Example: "I feel frustrated when you are late for meetings. I do not like having to repeat information. Furthermore, some techniques for assertiveness in communication are as follows. 1. Repeated Assertion: This technique allows you to feel comfortable by ignoring manipulative verbal side traps, argumentative baiting, and irrelevant logic while sticking to your point. To use this assertiveness technique, use

calm repetition, and say what you want, and stay focused on the issue most effectively. Some Examples would be "I have a great range of products to offer you" "That may be true, but I'm not interested at the moment" "Is there someone else here who would be interested?" "I don't want any of these products" 2. Fogging: This technique allows you to receive criticism comfortably, without getting anxious or defensive, and without rewarding manipulative criticism. To do this you need to acknowledge the criticism, agree that there may be some truth to what they say, but remain the judge of your choice of action.

Public Speaking & Presentation by Saiyra Akbar & Shahir A.A.

When an individual speaks publicly, they are communicating an important idea to the public. All forms of communication are expressions or ideas being conveyed to others. Effective communicating ideas can help within personal and business relationships, and career goals. Public speaking skills rely on your creativity, professionalism, and self-confidence. When you write a speech or prepare a presentation, you think about the best framework persuasive strategy, and what approaches to use when communicating your message to the public. The following is a simple strategic plan for public speaking:

1. Practice and prepare for success: Take time and practice your speech and presentation in front of family members, friends, or even a mirror. Make sure you are pronouncing the words correctly. The correct pronunciation and knowledge of what you are trying to say will give credibility to your message.

2. Overcome Nervousness and Stress: To overcome stage fright or fear of speaking publicly, practice in front of family members and friends. This will raise your confidence. You can also meditate or use positive affirmations and visualization exercises to reduce your anxiety. Self-hypnotism works to alleviate your fears. (the next segment will give you tips on how to use self-hypnosis) Remember fear is your own creation. Your mind has created feelings of fear through your stressed and fearful thoughts and emotions. Accept responsibility for creating it and get rid of it. Now Close your eyes and take a deep breath – Inhale and exhale completely several times. Just relax and let it all out. Now imagine all your tensions, all your tightness, and all your fears and worries are draining away. There is nothing to fear. Let the fear of Public Speaking dissolve out of you. Dissolve away any feelings of inadequacy. Say to yourself, "There is nothing to fear. I am having a conversation in front of family and friends. I am confident. I am relaxed, poised, charming, and optimistic. I will be completely free of fear, and this is so." Repeat it as many times as you need it.

3. Your Presentation: Put all your energy and concentration into giving the audience the best presentation, speech. Begin slowly. Smile. Be Confident. Use short sentences and pauses. Dress professionally and appropriately for the presentation. Stand up straight with your legs and shoulder slightly apart. Act naturally, use the proper gestures, nodding as needed, making appropriate hand gestures, etc.

4. Use Appropriate facial expressions and make eye contact with one person in the audience. Speak only with them. When you feel you have made a connection move to another member of the audience. 5. When making the speech or presentation, your tone, volume, and pitch should be consistent and balanced. Make sure you speak loud enough for the audience to hear you. Also, speak slowly with short sentences and avoid using word fillers and distracting words such as, "yeah," "oh," "hmmm," or "You know." It is important to practice, practice, practice. Present your speech in front of family and friends, anyone who is willing to listen, even a mirror will do. The more you practice the more you will get to know your topic intimately, the more confident your presentation will sound. Good Luck!

Internet Resources

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Holistic Life Coaching Psychology by Saiyra Akbar & Shahir A.A.

"Do not let the behaviors of others destroy your inner peace." Dalai Lama

"We change other people's behavior by changing our own." Anonymous

What is human nature? Many fields of science including psychology, anthropology, and sociology that deal with the question associated with human nature such as causation, distinguishing features, how fixed it is genetically or environmentally rooted. The nature of human nature is a very real issue and plays a deciding role in ethics, laws, punishment, theology, evolution, and every other human involvement. When we go beyond the obvious, we enter the realm of metapsychology. Metapsychology is a term coined by Sigmund Freud and means "beyond" psychology.

It is defined as a field of study that goes beyond the empirical facts and laws of psychology to explain the relationship between mind and body and how the mind is related to the universe. The website, https://en.wikipedia.org/metapsychology, says that. "A systematic attempt to discern and describe what lies beyond the facts and laws of psychology, such as the relation between body and mind or concerning the place of mind in the universe."

Another website, www.Dictionary.com, further defines metapsychology as "speculation about the origin, structure, function, etc., of the mind and about the relation between the mental and the physical, regarded as supplement to psychology." Simply put, metapsychology is the study of psychology with a metaphysical context. It defines itself from a transcended point of the obvious in the context of the physical and spiritual approach to understanding human nature. It is also the most important aspect of studying the metaphysics degree program. What makes human nature so fascinating is that it is impossible to categorize.

We all know what it is but cannot seem to define it. Just when you think you know what someone will do, they surprise you by doing the opposite. Human nature is both responsible for both the greatest acts of kindness and the most heinous acts of cruelty. Indeed, it seems like everything imaginable exists within human nature. But is it correct to say that people do things because of human nature? The website https://www.rationalargumentator.com/index/blog/2014/07/human-nature-is-tautological/ states that, "To say that human nature is the cause of any phenomenon is to say that such a phenomenon causes itself. To say that "some people steal because of human nature" is to say that "some people steal because they steal" or that "some people steal because that is the way humans are." This is not particularly enlightening as to why some people actually steal." Mr. Stolyarov explains in the same article, that when people do good things, human nature is never considered the cause, but when an individual performs an incorrect behavior, such as killing, stealing, abuse, harassment it is always blamed on human nature. He says in the same article that; "This leads me to suspect that a lot of presuppositions are smuggled in under the umbrella label of "human nature" which are not implicit in the term.

Namely, most people whose discussions are peppered by the term frequently presuppose that all human beings somehow have even the worst vices "in the nature." If "human nature" is "the way human beings are," then it is contrary to empirical evidence to suppose that killing, stealing, lying, and other vices are inherent in human nature.

We can find numerous examples of good, upstanding people who have never killed or stolen-and even a few whom we cannot imagine lying. Surely, "the way they are" is such that they do not kill, steal, or lie. This is as much a part of their human nature as killing, stealing, and lying are a part of the natures of genocidal dictators in North Korea, Iran, Zimbabwe, and Sudan. There is no reason to suppose that anyone is capable of any vice just because some people have been observed engaging in some vices."

Another key point in human behavior is that behaviors change over time. Behaviors are dynamic and as the world around us changes so do our attitudes and behaviors. As consciousness evolves, so does the model for human behavior. Everything in a society is about building relationships of one kind or another, and how we are involved with different aspects of human nature in our daily lives.

We can improve the quality of life and consciousness by understanding human behaviors, and why humans are compelled to behave in certain ways. Understanding human behaviors and determining what motivates them to act in a certain way, can lead to the mending of their deficiencies, spiritually and physically. Once you understand what motivates human behavior, we begin to empathize with the human condition, therefore, this enables and motivates us to learn to improve the human condition through education, research, and self-improvement concepts. This, in turn, reduces the poverty level, which is one of the main reasons for crime in society. By observing human behaviors and what drives them to choose a certain action we can get to the root of the behavior. When we understand the real reason why people behave in certain ways, we can relate to them and help find solutions to prevent these types of behaviors. In addition, understanding a problem and finding solutions leads to evolving and growth of the current situation, and as a result, we find a better way to do things.

. Thus, this leads to the emergence of positive, healthy, and morally correct behaviors. Human Nature For this certificate program, you must have a deep understanding of human nature. This is especially true if you are going to be a holistic life coach, holistic healer, or any other vocation that involves dealing with people. Being an effective life coach is all about understanding and working with human nature as it is a vital part of existence.

Furthermore, an effective holistic life coach comprehends and respects the human condition. In the previous segment, we explored some aspects of human nature. And while this entire program is about dealing with human nature and the human condition on various levels, this segment will discuss some of the more common and practical aspects of human nature, and how you can use this knowledge to become a more effective holistic life coach. Moreover, this knowledge can be applied to just any situation in life, whether personal or business. Common Traits of Human Nature Working with human nature is so important and so diverse that varied aspects of it overlap many different areas of leadership and life.

Therefore, there is some repetition and mention of points you studied in previous courses. I bring them into the discussion in this segment because not only do they apply but doing so will give you an excellent and concise overview of human nature in one place. The following are some relevant aspects or needs of human nature. While the following is not an exhaustive discussion of these traits, it does show how to use them in various ways.

Ponder these traits carefully to explore how they apply to your specific metaphysical specialization, practice, and life. For example, if you happen to be a manager or supervisor or any position where you deal with people, ponder how these principles apply to managing and interacting with others. If you are focusing on counseling or coaching, ponder how these traits can be used in helping your clients to solve their problems.

1. The Need to Only Do What One Sees a Benefit in Doing: Is asking yourself "What's in It for Me?" Whether you consciously realize it or not, we all ask this question constantly. As human beings, we do the things we do because, consciously or unconsciously, we see pay-off or benefit. Even remaining in a difficult situation or relationship indicates that perceived pay-off or benefit is involved, which is known as a secondary gain. Whether we consciously realize it or not, we stay in a difficult relationship because we see a secondary gain. This trait can be expressed healthily by realizing that personal benefits can come from generously helping others. We also benefit individually and globally from doing good things for others and the environment. Conversely, this trait can be unhealthy if we insist on only selfishly doing things that benefit us directly without regard to others or the environment. This trait also applies to those who manage others in business, a metaphysical practice, or a Holistic Life Coach. Leaders understand this human trait and work with it by providing and highlighting the benefits of tasks to underlings, as necessary.

2. The Need for Meaning, Purpose, and Belonging: This is a basic need that all human beings possess. Some variations exist within this trait as well: The need to love and to be loved; they need to contribute in a meaningful way; the need for satisfying work; and the need to feel needed. Leaders, managers, coaches, and healers can help individual members to find meaning in what they do by matching them up with duties in which they excel and with which they enjoy. Another way to support this human need is to develop a team culture where everyone is appreciated and respected. Counselors and coaches can assist their clients in discovering that which brings meaning to their lives. This will solve many other problems which may be manifestations of a lack of meaning.

3. The Need for Appreciation and Recognition: This trait is used to underscore and strengthen the previous trait above. Everyone needs a pat on the back, regularly, in a healthy way. I am not referring to them-esteem here. Look for opportunities to praise and recognize others' efforts sincerely, but do not overdo it. Every human being, regardless of their station in life, wants to feel unique, special, and appreciated. Think about the people you know and interact with in life. Do you know some who work hard and seem to be solid as a rock? What about your mentors, bosses, parents, and others? When was the last time you complimented them or told them that you appreciate their efforts? If it has been a while, why not let them know how you feel. Managers and team leaders recognize your team members' accomplishments in some way; even small rewards can be appreciated the same goes for family relationships. Parents should encourage and

appreciate the children's efforts when they do good actions when they get good grades. Recognize that they are doing their best.

4. The Need to Understand and to be Understood: People feel more in control when they have a general understanding of what is going on and what is expected of them. For example, let people know the details of a project and what is expected from them. Managers and team leaders, this is where your company's policies, job descriptions, and shared values come into play. When you outline the standards by which your team operates, you allow your members to know what is expected of them. This minimizes miscommunication between you and your members, which, in turn, minimizes problems. This trait comes into play in delegation also. Make sure you tell them why a task is important. People only do the things they see a benefit in doing. Being understanding is equally important. In personal relationships, make sure you give those close to you the opportunity to be understood. Seek out their input when appropriate. This should be automatic with spouses and partners.

5. The Need for Challenge and Accomplishment: Human beings thrive on challenges and accomplishments. We have an inherent need to grow beyond where we currently are and see positive results for so doing. This is undoubtedly why you are studying this program. Continue to embrace challenge; for it is the way to accomplishment. When considering worthwhile endeavors, never say, "That's too hard!" Instead, ask, "How hard can it be?" Being an effective leader means coaching, developing, and challenge your people in a variety of ways. Counselors and coaches, this trait may apply to some clients. Help them to find something that inspires them. Help them to see the positive benefits that result from living an inspired life, accept change more if they have a part in it. Resistance to Change is unhealthy because life is all about change, whether one wants to accept it or not. This means that we are all changing and, therefore, have a choice to make our lives better or worse. Learn to embrace change for it will happen with or without your approval. If you embrace it, you are in a much better position to control it positively.

Part of taking personal responsibility means not procrastinating, especially in important matters. Managers can help team members avoid procrastination by following up regularly on given tasks as appropriate. Some managers will often put off necessary discipline because they are afraid of harming the relationship. However, as a leader, you should always handle problems or challenge people immediately. If you have a problem, you have a choice. You can take care of the problem right away or you can suffer longer and still take care of it later. But either way, you will take care of the problem eventually. Problems do not go away all by themselves, and if left alone, they get worse, not better. As a leader, do not procrastinate. Deal with problems promptly.

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Enhanced Living Concepts by Saiyra Akbar & Shahir A.A.

Boundaries "...you define your intangible boundaries and to recognize them as an ever-present reality that can increase you love and save your life. In reality, these boundaries define your soul, and they help you to guard it and maintain it." Henry Cloud & John Townsend,

Boundaries

Every person has boundaries. Boundaries are simply an agreement with yourself as to what kind of behavior you will and will not accept from others. This means a healthy and stubborn adherence to act in the best interests of all concerned, but yourself first. Besides, for these reasons, we also set boundaries to protect ourselves as well as to have a healthy relationship with others and ourselves. You simply cannot have a healthy relationship with someone that has no boundaries.

Furthermore, you not only have the right, but you have a responsibility to protect and defend yourself against aggressive people who do not respect boundaries. The website https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_boundaries defines personal boundaries as, "Personal boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave towards them and how they will respond when someone passes those limits. They are built out of a mix of conclusions, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, past experiences, and social learning.

This concept or life skill has been widely referenced in self-help books and used in the counseling profession since the mid-1980s. According to some counselors, personal boundaries help to define an individual by outlining likes and dislikes and setting the distances one allows others to approach. They include physical, mental, psychological, and spiritual boundaries, involving beliefs, emotions, intuitions, and self-esteem. Jacques Lacan considered such boundaries to be layered in a hierarchy, reflecting "all the successive envelopes of the biological and social status of the person".

Personal boundaries operate in two directions, affecting both the incoming and outgoing interactions between people. These are sometimes referred to as the "protection" and "containment" functions." Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend talk about the importance of Boundaries. Most of us do not give the issue of boundaries a second thought until our boundaries have been crossed in a major way. And then we still do not give our boundaries the respect they deserve. If we do not respect our boundaries, why in the world would anyone else do so?

In the book "Boundaries," Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend says that "Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins leading me to a sense of ownership. Knowing what I am to own and taking responsibility for gives me freedom. If I know where my yard begins and ends. I am free to do with it what I like. Taking responsibility for my life opens many different options."

Often our family and close friends overstep our boundaries, and we are forced to move our boundary stick back, sometimes even to our own expense. Verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse are all boundary violations for which there is never an excuse. In unhealthy relationships, we frequently overlook these violations to our detriment. Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend explain in their book, "Boundaries", that, "...each one should carry their load. Everyone has responsibilities that only he or she can carry." Each one of us is expected to carry our weight. Which includes how to deal with our feelings, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as the responsibilities that God has given to each one of us, even though it might take effort.

This directly implies do not do for other's what they should and could do for themselves. Helping people in times of distress, tragedies and problems is a very noble thing to do, and it should be done. But as soon as your rights begin to get violated, it is time to step back. Boundary Violations We all have our boundaries. Some people have flexible boundaries, while others have none, yet again where some have too many boundaries. An imbalance of boundaries is not a good thing. How about you? Are you so focused on someone else's dysfunction that the line between "Where you end, and they begin" is blurry and confused? Are you so focused on someone else's dysfunction that it owns you?

My definition of a boundary violation is 'Anyone who tries to control, change, undermine, or demean another person, or withhold something from them that is owed is overstepping their relationship boundaries. The number of boundary violations in an unhealthy relationship are many but let me outline a few examples. Some apply to all relationships, and some apply only to intimate relationships. Each one of the following boundary violations are examples of attempts to control, change, undermine, or demean you: - - - - Ignoring you, not listening to you, constantly interrupting you, chronically finishing your sentences, or talking over you, berating you in private or in public, Invading your personal space Saying rude, hurtful, and disrespectful comments, e.g. "You're fat; You're ugly; You're a bitch /asshole, hate remarks (and worse)." Etc.

Pressuring you to do something against your better judgment. Not contributing fairly to the relationship such as with household chores or finances. Hitting, slapping, pushing, pawing, or forcefully confining you in one place. Whether certain actions constitute a boundary violation depends on intent, context, circumstances, and whether you have given permission or not. For example, stealing a kiss or a hug from someone with whom you are in an intimate relationship is not a boundary violation, but trying it with a stranger is.

Boundary violations occur in relationships because the victim allows them. We allow boundary violations when we do not stand up for ourselves. This usually happens when we do not stand up for ourselves because we have self-esteem and self-concept issues. Any healthy, self-complete person will never allow someone else to take advantage of them. Their attitude is, I will not walk on you, and I will not allow you to walk on me. When you feel your boundaries are violated, and are not sure, ask yourself, "Who's in charge in this situation?" The answer to this question is easy. If your boundaries are violated regularly, the violator oversees you. If your boundaries are not violated regularly (even if attempts are made), then you are in charge.

There will always be aggressive people around who will try to take advantage of you. Unfortunately, that's life. But by being complete within yourself, you will automatically thwart their attempts because you have self-esteem, not them-esteem. The key is to Remember that any self-

possessed person cannot become possessed by anyone or anything else. If you find yourself spending time, running around, and attending to the needs of another adult when he or she should be doing it themselves, then you are not in charge of yourself, at least not completely. If you now realize that you have been partially or fully controlled by someone else, it is time to do something about it.

Establishing Healthy Boundaries

In this segment, we will address reinventing yourself regarding your boundaries and core values. Boundaries involve some factors that are founded on your belief system. If you want your outside world to change, you must first change your inside world. Therefore, to establish healthy boundaries, you must first figure out who you are. This includes the process of reinventing and re-creating yourself into a healthier individual, which involves transforming your inner Identity. The elements that go into establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries are as foolows:

- *First, it is essential to know who you are, and why you are who you are (that is to examine your core values and belief system).*
- *Accept yourself unconditionally.*
- *Have high self-respect that is known and believe that you are worthy of respect and good treatment).*
- *Nurture healthy self-esteem and self-dignity.*
- *Take responsibility for your actions by establishing and protecting your boundaries. Respect your own free will and the free will of other people.*
- *Define and establish what behaviors and treatments you will and will not accept from others.*
- *Determine the consequences of your boundaries and establish how you will respond when someone attempts to violate your boundaries.*
- *In simpler terms, identify the boundary you wish to create.*
- *Communicate what you need by making a short declarative statement.*
- *Analyze the consequences of the boundary and explain why this boundary is important to you.*
- *Keep your boundaries realistic as you do not want to overdo it.*

Transforming Yourself

These values are used to re-invent and re-create yourself. The following are the steps to re-inventing and re-creating yourself. This action will redefine who you are and like a reset button will shift the foundation of your identity to a better version of yourself.

1. Take a piece of paper or a notebook, along with a pen. You can name this book your Reinvention Notebook. Start by approaching this process from a third-person view. Remove yourself emotionally from this process and begin by saying, "I want this new person to have this core value or this belief." Write it down.

2. Now relax and calm your mind. Take some deep breaths to clear the mind. Now imagine what you want the new you to be like. What qualities, core values would you have, write them down. Ask yourself, "What do I want this person to be?" Do not let the views, expectations, and judgments of family, friends, workmates, and religious leaders or religious concepts affect you. Go deep within yourself and be who you want to be, including virtues such as patience, compassion, kindness, loving, loyalty, trustworthiness, etc. This should be the ideal person that you want to be, without any hold.

3. Once you have a list of core values, define the healthy limits for each value as a "Healthy Limits", write the statement of your core value in the first person, this way your core value is in the present tense, and already a reality.

- *For example, a core value and boundary clause would be as follows:*
- *Core Value: Strong mental and emotional resources.*
- *Description: I focus my attention and emotional resources on things that are uplifting, up building, positive, and success-oriented, rather than being negative.*
- *Healthy Limits: I do not allow others to instill negativity in my life. I do not allow them to take space in my head, by becoming obsessed with worries, concerns, and other negative talks. The new me focuses only on the positive and all that is good. I focus on strong, healthy, positive mental and emotional resources.*
- *Core Value: Loyalty Description: I am loyal to others provided others are loyal to me. In the event there is a conflict of loyalty, I pledge to remain loyal to myself first and before anyone else. I will maintain my commitments provided those commitments do not make me or anyone else suffer.*
- *Healthy Limits: I reserve the right to rethink my commitments if they prove to be unsound. If another person is un-loyal to me. I will reassess my commitments.*

Step 4: In this section, you can now add disposition, demeanor, characteristics of the new you. An example would be, "I am upbeat, cheerful, and positive whether alone or with others." Step 5: Practice makes perfect. Everyday work on improving your new self. That continues to add core values and characteristics until you have exhausted every relevant issue. Reaffirm your conviction every day, because by following this religiously you take your power back. You become empowered. By the process of reinventing yourself, you have redefined your core values to the ones that you have chosen. Do not allow others to choose for you, as this is the "new you," and the new you is now based on internal validation. By learning, growing, and reinventing yourself, you become empowered. With this confidence, you will no longer be moving your boundaries back further and further. You will no longer be wondering where you end, and the other person begins.

Furthermore, you will no longer allow your boundaries to be violated because of previous dysfunctional thinking and beliefs. You now have healthy boundaries in which you will not walk on others but not allow others to walk on you either. Respecting the Boundaries of Others If you want others to respect your boundaries, then respect theirs also. Avoid violating other people's boundaries. Sometimes, we may not even realize that we are trespassing on someone's boundaries. For example, if someone offers to kindly help you with something, do not take it too far by continuing to ask him or her for favors.

Many in the metaphysical world are willing to help others. We just need to make sure that we do not violate their boundaries by taking undue advantage of their kindness. Do not wear out your welcome. Another vital aspect of respecting boundaries is not to impose unreasonable boundaries on others. If you do, you will find yourself with few relationships as we refer to such people as dominating and selfish. This is an area where our rights and theirs may need to be negotiated. Since our boundaries are determined by our beliefs and core values, they affect our energy signatures. The changes you have made to your inside world are manifesting in your outside world. This also means that you will no longer be attracted to dysfunctional people in your life. You will automatically surround yourself with people who share your values and ideals because like attracts like. This also means that you may not be interested in a relationship with a particular person (if that relationship was negative) because you are no longer the person that was initially interested in him or her. Consequently, your relationship needs to be changed at some level. Good relationships are all about compatible boundaries as they are about compatible energy signatures.

Vibrational Energy Signatures

Everything in the universe is made of vibrational energy, thus each one of us is made up of a certain energy that makes us who we are. This is our energy signature, which is based on the vibrational energy of our thoughts, emotions, belief systems, values, etc. Edgar Cayce Quotes the book "There is a River' by Thomas Sugrue, "The human body is made up of electronic vibrations, with each atom and element of the body, each organ and organism, having its electronic unit of vibration necessary for the sustenance of, and equilibrium in, that particular organism." Each thought we think, each emotion we feel carries a certain energy signature which becomes a part of our being. Therefore, if we go around with feelings of them-esteem, negative thoughts then that energy signature becomes our energy signature.

The website https://in5d.com/change-your-energy signature/ explains this concept, by describing how our whole universe is formed of energy, consciousness, and wisdom. As we begin to change our understanding of ourselves and the world around us, our vibrational spiritual energy changes and increases. This allows us to expand our consciousness and wisdom. It explains, "Expansion of consciousness helps us to see the presence of immutable Universal Laws that operate in our World. This deeper understanding takes us closer to our own Divine Self. One of the profound truths in our universe is that our world is a mirror!

Our world reflects our inner being... Our Core Energy...Moment to moment we move within an energy 'bandwidth' of our own. This energy reflects, in every way, our present manifested moment. This core energy attracts circumstances and people into our lives that have similar kinds of energy. Through our thoughts, we send out that energy signature to the universe." Thoughts are things. Thoughts and emotions have energy, and the Universe responds in likeness by sending similar kinds of energies into our life.

As we change our thoughts, emotions, core values, and beliefs, we change our energy, we change our world. Further on the same website https://in5d.com/change-your-energy-signature/, it says that "The easiest way to change your energy signature is to eliminate as much fear and negative energies from your life. This may involve refraining from hanging around those people of

lower vibration, turning off the TV, or even changing your diet to higher vibrational foods. I would also highly recommend connecting Mother Earth as much as possible.

Recently, the Schumann Resonance (SR) went up to 8.90, the highest I have seen since I have been watching it. The SR is the resonance or "heartbeat" of Mother Earth and has been at 7.83hz for what many people believe to be thousands of years. This is proof that our planet is raising its vibration, and she is allowing us to raise our vibration with her. When you raise your vibration, you change your energy signature!"

Enhanced Relationships

"Everything is energy. This fact is now being confirmed by scientists in the field of quantum physics. When we break everything down to the sub-atomic level, we find pure energy, no matter. This energy is always vibrating. Look around you. Everything you can see is vibrating; you are just not aware of it. Everything vibrates at a slightly different rate." https://mettahu.wordpress.com/tag/energy signature/

To create a healthy and empowered relationship you must first know and accept yourself. That is why you are who you are. Once you know who you are and why you are who you are, you will begin to understand why you have a good or bad relationship. We all have a certain energy signature that is built from our core values, beliefs, thoughts, and emotions gained from our past experiences. This is our internal state which we mirror into our outer world. This reflection from the internal to the external is called External Replication.

Everything in our life, our world, reflects what we are inside of ourselves. We emit an energy signature that attracts others' who are compatible energies signatures of the same frequency. That is, like attracts like. This means that they have similar interests/beliefs/values, which create similar energy patterns. Two people can have similar energy signatures and be vibrationally compatible, but have a toxic, dysfunctional relationship. This is because having a similar energy signature (similar energetic vibrations) does not necessarily mean having a healthy relationship. It just means that you are in harmony.

So, the question arises, why do we stay in an unhealthy relationship? Regardless of good or bad relationships, there is always a benefit to remain in a relationship. The first reason we stay in a toxic relationship is that we gain an energetic balance by being on the same wavelength. Simply put, our energies are compatible regardless of whether they are good or bad for us. The reason that we stay in a toxic relationship is that on an unconscious level, we are comfortable with our energy signature, we like ourselves just the way we are and are unwilling to go through the discomfort of changing ourselves, that is why we remain on that frequency level.

We resist change, because it takes us out of our comfort zone, and brings us to the level of experiencing fear, loss of control from that familiar feeling of being safe on that level. On the other hand, we have the concept of 'opposites don't attract'. We are led to believe that opposites attract each other, but that is far from the truth. In fact, opposites repel each other. People with opposite energy signatures cancel each other out, therefore no relationship is possible.

People with opposite energy signatures usually tend to avoid each other as they have nothing in common. So how do we change or improve our energy to enhance the quality of our life and relationships? We do this by changing our energy frequency, which can be done by shifting our internal beliefs, values, and validation - our self-concepts by applying enhanced principles that we have learned to our life, we change ourselves, thus our energy signatures.

To have a compatible, healthy relationship you need to realize that every person deserves to be respected and that they have the right to free will, and can choose, and make decisions for themselves. There is a general rule of respecting others, which states that "You cannot control or change anyone other than yourself." Controlling others is a serious boundary violation which causes one to lose trust and respect in others.

That is, we tend to avoid, and fear people who are trying to control us. This ends up creating bad relationships whether they are professional or personal. Also, do not give unsolicited advice to anyone, only when they ask for it, then advise them. Have realistic expectations of others, and accept them for who they are, and not for their human differences.

Furthermore, respect others' rights and boundaries, and make efforts not to take advantage of others. All relationships should and must be win/win or will not last. Protecting Your Boundaries Another important aspect of building healthy relationships is to create and protect your boundaries. Everyone has boundaries. We all have our beliefs, limitations, and core values that we need to consider when having a healthy relationship. For some these boundaries could be non-existent, negligent, or flexible, while for others they are the most important aspect of the relationship.

The first thing to determine is what is a boundary violation. A boundary violation is "Any attempt to control, change, undermine, or demean another person." The following are some common boundary violations that should be avoided to have an enhanced relationship:

Berating or demeaning you in public or private. Not listening to you, interrupting you and finishing your sentences, or talking over you. Invading your personal space. Saying rude, hurtful, and disrespectful comments. Giving unsolicited advice. Pressuring you to do something against your better judgment. No contributing to relationships, household chores, or finances. Physically abusive, hitting, pushing, and forcefully confining you in one place.

Boundary Violations occur in a relationship because we have allowed them to occur by not standing up for ourselves. This happens because we rely on external expectations and validations. A person with healthy self-esteem will never allow boundary violations to occur. A self-fulfilled person will protect their boundaries by the motto "I will not walk on you, and nor will I allow you to walk on me." When boundary violations occur, it is important to put a stop to them. This can be done by being assertive and fair in any situation, asking yourself if you are honest, direct, and empathetic, and display a win-win attitude.

Assertiveness will help you deal with boundary violations in an effective resolving manner. Assertively resolving a conflict means a positive, peaceful resolution to the conflict. So, the first thing to do is realize when a situation occurs, and what do we do? How do we react? For example, if someone gives a derogatory and demeaning remark. To defend ourselves we react by either

insulting them or staying quiet and avoiding them. Our reaction is instinctive, fight, or flight to defend ourselves.

But do we have to react defensively? No, we do not. We can instead be a self-complete person and respond assertively. Responding means we think first. You are free to deal with the matter, immediately, later, or never. It is entirely up to you. You can just not deal with it, which means the relationship is over. If you are going to respond, do it promptly. Here is where you set boundaries and an assertive response to go with it. What will happen if you say nothing? By instilling an assertive response in your daily life, you can establish a response to most boundary violations and at the same time, you protect boundaries assertively.

Sometimes some people will not back off and continue with their current demeaning, aggressive, or abusive behavior. In this case, you have no choice but to discontinue the relationship. The people who violate your boundaries the most are the ones closest to you. Ending those types of relationships is much harder, but it should nevertheless be done if the person will not stop.

Characteristics of a Healthy Intimate Relationship

The goal in an intimate relationship is:

• To feel calm, centered, and focused. • The intimacy needs to be safe, supportive, respectful, nonpunitive, and peaceful. • You feel taken care of, wanted, unconditionally accepted, and loved just for existing and being alive in a healthy intimate relationship. • You feel part of something and not alone in such a relationship. • You experience forgiving and being forgiven with little revenge or reminding of past offenses. • You find yourself giving thanks for just being alive in this relationship. • A healthy intimate relationship has a sense of directedness with plan and order. • You experience being free to be who you are rather than who you think you need to be for the other.

Internet Resources

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_boundaries,

https://www.realizedbygrace.org/post/7-major-stages-of-spiritual-awakening-according-to-sufism, https://in5d.com/change-your-energy-signature/,

The website has a document that is immensely helpful in establishing healthy boundaries, file:///C:/Users/15144/Downloads/establishing-healthy-boundaries-in-relationships.pdf

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Crystal & Gemstone Therapy by Saiyra Akbar

Please be aware that that Intuitive diagnosis Consultations with a Gemstone Therapist do not replace conventional medical diagnosis and treatment of psychology. Consult your physician or licensed practitioner before meeting with a Crystal & Gemstone Therapist.

Crystals are formed from within the three layers of the earth: The core, mantle, and crust. The intense heat at the core creates the molten rock, which is then mixed with water and other earth elements to create various forms and deposits of minerals, crystals, stones, and rocks. These minerals are formed through the process of precipitation, crystallization& recrystallization and by changing the chemical makeup.

- Precipitation: Is the process where various elements combine with water to create a new chemical structure.

- Crystallization & Recrystallization: Is the process where elements are forced together to create crystals, minerals, and rocks. Whereas recrystallization is a double process of crystallization where the mineral undergoes chemical changes through high pressures and heat to create new structures, thus new minerals.

- Changing the chemical makeup: Is the process where the earth's original environment and chemicals are changed to bring about new minerals. For Example, oxidation, combustions etc.

Crystals have two main characteristics to them, which are that they are piezoelectric and pyroelectric in nature. Piezoelectric means to get electricity by compression. For example, when a crystal is compressed, electricity is released, and the crystal generates an electrical frequency that gives the crystal its power. This energy can be used to heal, meditate upon, as it interacts and intermingles with our energetic systems.

The second characteristic of crystal is called pyroelectric, this comes about by increasing the temperature of the crystal by rubbing it. The increased temperature brings out the electrical energy of the crystal, which can be used for healing, meditation or whatever purpose crystals can be used History of Crystals.

Crystals have been in use since man started to explore the earth and its many treasures. Crystals themselves are as old as mother earth. Crystals have been used for many purposes, such as healing, ceremonies, meditation, good luck charms, to ward off evil and psychic attacks, decorations, divination, gaining virtues and wisdom, wealth, and beauty. The high priests of antiquity used them in their breast plates, their chalices, swords, and various other sacred ornaments of the church.

Many kings and queens wore crystals on their crowns and robes to signify their royal status. Scott Cunningham says in his book, "Encyclopedia of Crystal, Gem, and Metal Magic", that, "From the earliest prehistoric times to our technological age we found beauty, power, and mystery within stones and metals with their power we can change ourselves and our lives. Stone magic is as old as time. It began when the earliest human sensed some force trapped within the stones that

surrounded them. Stones were first used as amulets, objects worn to deflect negativity or "evil". Later they were revered as deities, offered as sacrifices, and buried for blessings and fertility of the land. Their use is intimately connected with religions, rituals and magic." As we explore the ancient cultures and civilizations of the world, we find the Egyptians believed in the mystical powers of crystals and used them to heal many illnesses.

They invented a system of how the color of the crystal corresponds to a certain energy center of the same color. The color of the body part and associated energy center was matched to the color of the gemstone. The Egyptian Royalty and high religious officials were usually buried with gemstones, crystals to guide them in the underworld. Katrina Raphaell says in her book "Crystal Enlightenment", that, "Many deceased royalties were laid to rest with elaborate collections of gems and stones, when the tomb of King Tut of Egypt was found, the array of riches astonished the world. "Another great civilization that used crystals in their everyday life was Atlantis. They used crystals for everything, technology, such as their flying vehicles, Vimana's used crystal technology to fly, and communications equipment used crystals as well.

Crystals were also used for healing, for recording information and telepathic communications. It was said that the wise ones of Atlantis programmed various types of crystals with information and sacred knowledge that would help future generations. When the time was right, those crystals would appear on earth to help humanity evolve.

According to Edgar Cayce, who is known as the Sleeping Prophet and an authority on Atlantis lore, the Atlanteans had unique technologies that used powerful crystals as the source of their power. These crystals were huge and possessed great strength of these unique technologies. They were known as "Fire Crystals". It has been said that the misuse of these "Fire-Crystals" was the reason for the sinking and destruction of Atlantis. The power of "Fire-Crystals" were akin to the nuclear power of today. It is said that these crystals remain under water in the Bermuda Triangle. These Fire-Crystals still emit some sort of energy fields that disrupt passing by aircrafts, ships etc.

Furthermore, the bible also talks about the use of crystals. In the Exodus we are told how Aaron (brother of Moses) was given the power of God by using twenty-seven different crystals in a specific formation on his breastplate. When this breastplate was put on the chest area, above the heart center, the wearer would be endowed with special powers. Melody says in her book, "Love Is in the Earth a Kaleidoscope of Crystals", that, "The Christian Bible refers to crystals over 200 times. Recall, the spirituality crystalline city whose walls were made of crystals, whose gates were of pearl, whose streets have no dust but gold dust, whose crystalline light falls upon the crystal sea and crystal river, and where souls that are clear as crystal are jewels forever in the crown of the redeemer.

Precious stones of crystalline formation were used in the foundation of New Jerusalem [Revelations]. They were also used in the breastplate of Aaron the Hebrew high priest [Exodus]; note that there are several translations regarding the stones used in the breastplate hence, each stone, which has been previously defined as having been used in the breastplate [a total of 27 from the various translations] is referenced within the text describing the stone.

Crystalline structures have been found in the ruins of Babylonia and in the ancient tombs of Egyptian and Chinese rulers." In the Indian culture, the Hindus used stones for protection and

healing. The Greeks, Tibetans, Romans believed crystals influenced and affected the physical body and affected the physical body and thus wore amulets and talismans made of crystal and gemstones. This aided the wearer in healing, to ward off psychic attacks and to gain wisdom. Some would recite mantras or words of power to enhance the power of gemstones and crystals. It has been said that ancient Buddhists and Tibetans used crystals bowls for healing and producing light, for protection, and in their sacred mandalas.

The Chinese were said to use crystals for healing meditation. Jade was known to be the most common crystal to be used by the Chinese culture. Jade was known to be the most common crystal to be used by the Chinese culture. Many Jade statues and ornaments decorated their homes and temples with the belief of bringing courage and wisdom into their daily life. Their warriors used them in their breastplates, shields, and swords to enhance the power of protection and courage. The Mayans were said to use crystals as vision stones. They would lay out the crystals in an elaborate formation on ley lines, the earth's energy veins.

The website www.ehow.com/facts_5460562_history_crystals.html, states that, "In Peru, Spanish chroniclers recorded that when they invaded the Incan Empire and captured the king and queen and the priests immediately fled to the Temple of the Sun in Cuzco, where they communicated with other regents of the land, and decided what was to be done, by gazing into the black mirror situated at the temple center. Significantly, the Incan Temple of the sun, and the pyramid complexes of the Maya's were all located on earth energy lines. There is thus reason to believe that the ancient possessed the ability of transmitting images along these lines, and crystal lenses or screens were used at specific centers to transform the images into pictures, much like a modern television set."

The Mayans also used crystals to diagnose and heal diseases. The Native American, the Aborigines of Australia, the Africans all revered the uses of crystals as healing stones and gemstones that held supernatural power that helped them travel in the dream world. Witch doctors, shamans and healers used them to detect illnesses by moving the stones over the physical form and concentrating on the energy fields and energy centers. By this, they were able to diagnose energy blockages that caused the disease to manifest.

In our present time, our modern everyday technology is using crystals to transmit energy, memory chips, computers, watches, ultrasound devices, radio, and all use quartz crystals to operate. Liquid crystals are being used in advanced technology. The energy field of the quartz, when cut in a specific configured or shape can be used to control electronic equipment and capacitors.

Section 2 - How to Heal with Crystals

Crystals when used for healing assist in the balancing of the energies of the auric bodies and chakras. They do this by assisting and maintaining the chemistry of the physical, emotional, and intellectual bodies. The energy (vibrational frequency) of the crystals amplifies the vibrational frequency of the physical form. This they do when we use the crystals to impact the major energy centers, called the Chakras. The crystals energy field interacts and intermingles with the vibrational frequency of the chakras and the part focused on. The energy centers of our system are further associated with various organs of the physical body. Marion McGeough says in her book, "Crystals Healing and the Human Energy Field: A Beginner's Guide", that "...Crystals can facilitate healing and increase one's vibrational energy..." By aligning the energies of the crystals to the infected part, healing can be initiated. Crystals bring in new energy (vibrational frequencies) in the older systems. The new vibrational frequency brings about a new perspective into a stagnate situation.

Each crystal has its own personality, energetic pattern and can be used to treat different ailments. With the right intention and focusing the energy of the crystal on the diseased parts, the illness can begin to heal. The shape of the crystal also plays an important role in determining the energy flow of the crystal, which can be used to heal the subtle bodies. The energy flow works through the different shapes of the crystals to manipulate the energy fields of what it encounters, for example body parts. Scott Cunningham says in his book, "Encyclopedia of Crystals, Gem, and Metal Magic", that, "In the shape lies the magic" Crystals shaped in the form of a square are good to use for prosperity and grounding. They also symbolize the earth.

Pyramid shaped crystals use the top of the crystal for bringing energy in and out. Crystals that are roundly shaped promote feminine energies and aspects. They are receptive, represent fertility, magnetism, and attraction. They can be also used to enhance psychic abilities, increase money sources and spirituality. Crystals in the shape of spheres are used in scrying. Long stones or wands on the other hand represent the male aspect and energies. These shapes project energy and electrical power.

Egg shaped or oval crystals are good to increase fertile grounds for new ideas, to enhance creative endeavors. They can also be used to aid in conception. Crystals that have holes in them are sacred and are often used in ritual ceremonies. Crystals that are formed like different parts of human anatomy. These stones can be used to aid in healing the specific part of the body, that the crystal is shaped like. For example, heart-shaped stones can be used to treat heart ailments and promote love relationships.

Another important factor in healing crystals is their color. The color of the crystal can be matched up with the energy center in question to heat. The color of the crystal is one of the major aspects in healing a certain chakra.

The World of Subtle Energy Subtle Energy is the energy of the universe, the fabric of the cosmos, it is infinite, limitless, the stuff that creates everything. It is also known as chi, qi, prana, etheric energy, universal consciousness. Subtle energy operates on vibrations and its varying degrees of expression.

White Light Meditation Protection Against Negative Energies

- *Take nine clear quartz crystals. Lie down in a comfortable position. Place the clear quartz on the seven major chakras, you can tape them into place if you like. The remaining two quartz hold them in each hand. Now make the intention by saying the following affirmation, "With these crystals, I am fully protected, loved and without fear."*
- *Begin to imagine a ball of white, luminous, light a few inches above your head. Now imagine the white light pouring out of the ball into your head.*
- *Let the white light move down into the crown of your head, down your head, down your head, your eyes, your eyebrows, your face, down your throat chakra, into your shoulders and down your arms (first the right arm & then the left). Let the healing white light pour out of each finger.*
- *Then imagine the white light move down your front and backs, upper torso, down the spine and your stomach. Take a moment and fill your stomach with light and then move down your legs, into your feet and let the white light pour out of each toe.*
- *Then imagine your body's outline emanating, white, and misty light as if in a protective layer.*
- *Stay in the white light for 15-20 minutes or for however long you want.*
- *You can also play soft meditation music in the background to enhance the experience.*

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